

SUCCESSFUL AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDENTS IN TWO-WAY IMMERSION
PROGRAMS: PARENT AND STUDENT PERCEPTIONS

A Dissertation

by

SONIA KAY BOONE

Submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies of
Texas A&M University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

December 2007

Major Subject: Curriculum and Instruction

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ABSTRACT

Successful African American Students in Two-Way Immersion Programs: Parent and
Student Perceptions. (December 2007)

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The purpose of this study was to examine perceptions of possible factors that lead to academic success for African American children who participated in two-way immersion programs. In order to examine the perceptions, the following areas were explored: 1.) The evolution of the academic achievement gap that exists between African American and Anglo children and the reasons theorists gave as to why the gap exists, as well as the importance of this connection to two-way immersion program participation 2.) The evolution of the modern two-way immersion language program via its development through bilingual education, and 3.) The development of Canadian two-way immersion language programs, and how political, economic, and cultural factors have impacted their successful implementation.

The research method consisted of purposeful sampling of six African-American children in fourth and fifth grade who are participants in an elementary two-way immersion language program and their primary caregivers. The interviews were audio taped with notes taken for clarity.

The data revealed that the primary caregivers perceived the participation of their children in a two-way language immersion program to be an educational move which would enhance the lives of their children economically, educationally and socially. The primary caregivers maintained involvement in the education of their children through facilitating homework completion in Spanish, communicating with teachers on a regular basis, participating in PTO, and facilitating structured and unstructured extra curricular activities with family and friends. The children perceived positive teacher interaction to play an important role in their academic success. They had positive experiences speaking Spanish with friends, family, and persons that they did not know.

The primary caregivers perceived that the school and the district did not provide enough additional support to facilitate Spanish language acquisition for their children. This would indicate that more support from the school and the district is needed for future groups of African-American children in two-way immersion language programs.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my “dream team,”

To my parents, Mrs. Wilma Clay Boone and Mr. Ellis L. Boone, who have constantly provided love, encouragement, and support so that I would complete this journey of a lifetime. When I insisted that I might not finish this journey, you both insisted that I could and that I would. God has blessed me tremendously by placing you in my life and seeing me through this journey. My completed document is the thanks that I know that you have been waiting for.

To my deceased maternal grandparents, John and Lela Law, who continually encouraged all four of their grandchildren to strive to reach the highest potential, my thanks to them.

To my deceased brother, Ellis L. Boone Jr., my thanks to him for encouraging me to “move up” and “get it done.” I will be eternally grateful to you. This one is for us.

To my aunt, Luretha Holmes Holiday, and her children, Yolanda Holiday Gourrier and her husband Steven Gourrier, John Holiday, and Desmond Gourrier, thank you for your words and unselfish acts of encouragement.

To my closest sister friends, Janelle Brown, Teresa Fluery, Barbara Garrett, Allyson Lawson, Bertdell Norwood, Coretha O’Neal, Mary Patrick, and Debra Rougeau, thank you for being the sister friends that you are- kind, caring, and compassionate.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

There are many English-speaking children in the United States who learn a second language while attaining academic success. The parents of these children opt to have their children participate in some form of educational language program (Two-way immersion or dual language programs) so that the children can attain academic success while learning a second language. These children are from different racial and ethnic backgrounds- African American, Anglo American, Hispanic American, and Asian American, and they have the opportunity to participate in various kinds of two-way immersion or dual language programs. According to different scholars (Collier, 1992; Cummins, 2003; McLaughlin, 1995), the purpose of two-way immersion or dual language programs is to foster high levels of literacy in two languages in an additive bilingual setting; therefore, the majority of the two-way immersion or dual language programs in the United States have a primary focus of teaching children to be completely literate in two languages: English and another language (Thomas & Collier, 1997).

The different children who participate in these programs can be divided into two language groups- children whose first language is English, and children whose first language is a language other than English. Each racial, ethnic, and language group encounters its own set of factors that have a positive effect on how well these children

This dissertation follows the style of the *Bilingual Education Journal*.

do academically, as well as barriers that could impede academic success.

Statement of the Problem

There are many studies that highlight Anglo English proficient children that participate in elementary two-way immersion and dual language programs (De Jong, 2002). These studies primarily focus on the factors that facilitate academic success in two languages for this population of children. There are also studies that highlight Hispanic English language learners (ELL's) who participate in elementary two-way immersion and dual language programs, and the factors that facilitate academic success in either English only or English and Spanish for this population of language learners (Collier, 1992; Alanis, 2000; Kirk Senesac, 2002; Collier & Thomas, 2004). The studies that highlight African American children who participate in elementary two-way immersion programs focus on race and intelligence as factors in regards to academic success for this particular group of children with no emphasis being placed on how to help African American children achieve academic success in the elementary two-way language program setting (Nicoladis, Taylor, Lambert, & Cazabon, 1998). The absence of studies highlighting this unique group of children makes it difficult for teachers, parents, and school administrators to develop strategies and techniques to help this group of children succeed academically through the vehicle of learning a second language.

Purpose of the Study

This study seeks to examine perceptions of possible factors that lead to academic success for African American children who participate in two-way immersion language programs.

Significance of the Study

The importance of this study is paramount: the population of the United States is increasing on a daily basis and Texas is a state that is growing by leaps and bounds. According to the U. S. Census data, 17% of the population of the United States speaks a language other than English in the home. By the year 2030, Lara states that Hispanic students will constitute a majority of Texas and California public schools (Lara-Alecio, Galloway, Irby, Rodriguez, & Gomez, 2004). At the present, more than ninety percent of the English language learners in Texas public schools speak Spanish as their primary language (Alanis, 2000). Day contends that by the year 2010, the Hispanic-origin population may become the second-largest race/ethnic group in the United States (Day, 1996). This will be significant in regards to economic power and who will be able to share in the economic, social, and political wealth of this state. Indeed, with the development of globalization and the increase of democratic rule around the world, the need for fluency in languages other than English is critical (Vance, 2004). Although there are studies documenting the narrowing of the academic achievement gap between African American and Anglo children (Hedges & Nowell, 1999), studies still show evidence that African American children continue to lag behind other racial and ethnic groups in the academic arena (Tucker, Herman, Pedersen, Vogel, & Reinke, 2000). Considering that African-American children continue to lag behind other racial and ethnic groups of children academically, it is imperative that positive perceptions are identified so that this group of children will be able to fully participate in the political

and economic growth of our state and country. The research questions that will guide this study are:

- 1.) What are the positive factors that parents and students perceive to be the reasons for academic success of African American children who participate in two-way immersion language programs?
- 2.) What do the parents and students perceive as challenges that had to be overcome in order for African American children who participate in elementary two-way immersion language programs to be successful?

Definition of Terms

For the purposes of this study, academic success can be described in terms of a student reaching at least the minimum passing standard at any given grade level during a school year. Different states in the United States use different measures, whether they are norm-referenced or criterion-referenced exams to measure the academic success of a child.

In Texas, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) and the Texas Legislature have written the Texas Education Code (TEC). The TEC document mandates that the State Board of Education and the TEA adopt a statewide assessment that is criterion-referenced to measure student achievement and ensure school accountability. (Texas Education Code, 1995, chap. 39) The assessment measures student achievement in grades three to eleven in the areas of reading, writing, math, English language arts, science, and social studies. This assessment is known as the Texas Assessment of

Knowledge and Skills, or the TAKS. The TEA and the Texas Legislature have mandated that all students must be able to meet what has been described as the minimum passing standard score on the TAKS tests to be able to advance to the next grade level.

The term perception is defined by Reber & Reber (2001) as the awareness of an organic process. The perception of a conscious event, such as the actual experiencing of a process or a chain of processes is initiated by some external or internal stimulus. More simply stated, the process of perception is caused by either an internal or external force that produces the product, or the perception that is experienced by the individual (Reber & Reber, 2001).

The components for perception are as follows: physical, physiological, neurological, sensory, cognitive, and affective senses. Under these five components, Reber & Reber note the following eight factors that usually determine what is perceived by the person: attention (this is when the event is noticed), constancy (this indicates that the image that is noticed remains the same), motivation (the image that is noticed is affected by the motivational state of the individual), organization (this means that perception is mentally organized into coherent wholes), set (this indicates the cognitive and or emotional view that is taken when the stimulus array affects what is perceived), learning (how much of what is perceived is innate, and how much is actually acquired), distortion and hallucination (this means that strong feelings can distort the perception, and factors such as lack of sleep, emotional stress, and drugs can produce hallucination), and illusion (this indicates that there are circumstances where what is perceived cannot be easily predicted from the physical stimulus array) (Reber & Reber, 2001).

For the purposes of this dissertation, perceptions, and in particular, student and parent perceptions are important because perceptions have been noted to impact student achievement. Scholars Bibou-Nakou, Kiosseoglou, & Stogiannidou note that teachers beliefs and perceptions considerably influence their ways of understanding and acting in the classroom, and this ultimately impacts student achievement (Bibou-Nakou, Kiosseoglou, & Stogiannidou, 2000). Other scholars note that high achieving African American students have cited that their perceptions of how their teachers feel about them and their perceptions of positive school interactions are instrumental in their academic success (Edwards, 1976; Tucker, Herman, Pedersen, Vogel, & Reinke, 2000; Hwang, Echols, & Vrongistinos, 2002).

The term two-way immersion education is defined by Christian, Howard, and Loeb as an educational program that integrates language minority and language majority students in the same classroom, beginning at the early elementary grades to provide content area instruction and language development for all students in two languages. Two-way immersion, or, TWI educational programs foster an environment that promotes positive attitudes toward both languages and cultures, as well as supports the development of complete bilingual proficiency for both groups of participating students. (Christian, Howard, & Loeb, 2000) Christian contends that the two-way immersion approach shows the native English speaker that learning a new language is additive and that the speaker of the other language sees the importance of maintaining and continuing with the other language (Christian, 1996).

The term dual language education (sometimes called two-way immersion education) is defined by Torres-Guzman (Torres-Guzman, 2002) as being an enrichment bilingual multicultural education program. Although Alanis (Alanis, 2000) does define dual language education as educating equal numbers of language minority (usually Spanish) and language majority (usually English) children in the same classroom by using the two languages for instruction and learning, the distinction between a two-way immersion program and a dual language program, Torres-Guzman notes, is that in a dual language program, equal time is devoted to instruction and exposure to two languages whereas a two-way educational program seeks to educate two language groups (a language minority group and a language majority group) to be equally fluent in both languages. This would indicate that dual language does not necessarily mean that two different language groups will be educated simultaneously to be fluent in two languages.

Bilingual Education is a term that is used to define a language program model that seeks to instruct ELL's to acquire English and succeed in mainstream, English only classrooms (Lara-Alecio et al., 2004). There are many different kinds of bilingual educational program models. The most commonly utilized bilingual program is the transitional model, where initially, subject matter is taught in the first language, and English is gradually increased to the point that ultimately, all instruction is given in English (Lara-Alecio et al., 2004).

Limited English Proficient (LEP) is a term that has been used to define children whose primary language is a language other than English. This term accentuates a perceived deficiency rather than proficiency, and this label focuses attention on past and

present performances instead of highlighting the possibility of functioning well in two or more languages (Baker, 2001). For the purposes of this study, the term English language learner (ELL) will be used instead of LEP.

English Language Learner (ELL) is a term that defines a student learning English using a positive term, thus emphasizes learning English as an accomplishment, rather than using the term Limited English Proficient, or LEP, which has a negative connotation or the emphasis of the student suffering from a limitation (LaCelle-Peterson & Rivera, 1994; August & Hakuta, 1998).

Educational Inequity is defined by Ladson-Billings (in Skrla, Scheurich, Johnson, Jr., & Koschoreck, 2001) as the inequitable treatment that is experienced by children of color in typical public schools. This treatment, which is detrimental, continues to impact this group of students as they are often routinely over assigned to special education classes, tracked to low level classes, over represented in disciplinary cases, and afforded differential access to resources and facilities (Skrla et al.). This group of children often attends schools that are inequitably financed and segregated, teacher centered and generally hostile in any sense of a learning environment (Skrla et al.).

Equity Gap is a term that is used by Slavin to describe the opportunities that children are provided and the outcomes that the same children achieve (Slavin, 1998). Slavin contends that children from lower-class income homes start off at a disadvantage because they often have had less access to quality prenatal care, quality health care, quality day care and quality early childhood programs. These are supports that are

afforded to most children from middle-class homes and are often taken for granted (Slavin, 1998). Slavin goes on to state that the situation is compounded by the school system because these children most likely grow up to live in low wealth inner cities and as a result, their schools receive less in per pupil funding than children who live and attend schools in the wealthy suburbs (Slavin, 1998). This creates the equity gap.

Organization of the Study

This chapter presented an overview of this study that included the statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, the significance, and the definition of terms. Chapter II presents a review of the literature that refers to the following bodies of research: academic success and the achievement gap that exists between African American and Anglo children, the evolution of the elementary two-way immersion language program via bilingual education, and the development of successful two-way language immersion programs in Canada. Chapter III includes the methodology for collecting and analyzing the data.

Chapter IV includes an analysis of the data. It also includes the presentation of themes that emerged as a result of this study. Chapter V includes the summary, conclusions, and recommendations of this study.

Summary of Introduction

In summary, there are many English-speaking children in the United States whose parents make a conscious choice to place them in a variety of language immersion programs as an attempt to gain fluency in a second language. In these language programs, there have been a wide variety of studies conducted to ascertain the

effectiveness of the programs, as well as perceptions and factors that enhance and inhibit academic success in the second language. Many of the studies are conducted with Anglo English-speaking, Hispanic English-speaking, and Hispanic Spanish speaking subjects. The only studies conducted regarding the African-American children who participate in language immersion programs are designed to study the correlation between race, intelligence, and language learning. This study seeks to address the perceptions that primary caregivers and their children have in regards to what makes the children academically successful in a two-way language immersion program and what impedes academic success for African-American children who participate in these kinds of language immersion programs.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The present study refers to three existing bodies of research: academic success and the achievement gap that exists between African American and Anglo children, the evolution of the elementary two-way immersion language program via bilingual education, and the development of successful two-way immersion language programs in Canada. In this chapter, I will review the previous research findings in these three areas and lay the theoretical foundation for this study. The first part of this review will briefly highlight the evolution of the academic achievement gap that exists between African American and Anglo children and give reasons that theorists have stated as to why the gap exists. Factors and conditions that help create academically successful African American learners will also be highlighted, and finally, the connection between the achievement gap and African American children that participate in two-way immersion language programs will be drawn. Then, the evolution of the modern two-way immersion language program will be discussed via its development through bilingual education in the United States, how war inhibited the development of second language learning in the United States, the re-introduction of bilingual education in the United States. Then I will discuss the political, economic, and cultural factors that impact the implementation of successful two-way immersion language programs in the United States. Finally, I will highlight the development of Canadian two-way immersion language programs, and how political, economic, and cultural factors have impacted their successful implementation.

African American Children, Anglo Children, and the Achievement Gap

Race has always been an issue in regards to educational equity, academic achievement, and African American children. Whereas American children of Anglo descent have always had the opportunity to attend school and achieve academically, African American children have not always been afforded this same opportunity because of their race (Hallinan, 2001). Indeed, the American educational system was initially designed to educate Anglo American male children. Cremin (in Darling-Hammond, 1998) describes the American system of education as one that evolved to systematically shut out African American slave children and Native American children.

Historical Overview of the Evolution of the Achievement Gap

The American public school system was created in the 1800's. Its mission was to promote social equality through equal access to education; however, for many decades the public school system did not even enroll African American students. Hallinan (Hallinan, 2001) contends that in most states in the south, it was illegal to teach African American children to read or write, and because these children were often slaves, they did not attend school. Hallinan (Hallinan, 2001) continues by stating that even after the end of slavery, African American children were prohibited from attending Anglo schools, thus perpetuating the issues of educational inequity and thus creating the existence of the achievement gap.

Although the law of the land dictated freedom and equality for all Americans, African Americans faced many instances where the treatment that was afforded was not equal to the treatment that was afforded to Anglo Americans. White (White, 1969) states

that African Americans were forced to ride separate railways, attend separate churches and schools, and African Americans could not even sit on juries and give evidence. African American children faced the same dilemma as their elders in that they were forced endure receiving an education in facilities that were often inadequate in comparison to the facilities that Anglo American children attended (White, 1969). Even in the north, segregation was enforced through all segments of society, including schooling and education. Funke (Funke, 1920) documents an example of the perpetuation of educational inequality and the achievement gap by contending that in 1910, for every group of 57 African American children, there was one teacher, whereas for every group of 45 Anglo American children, there was one teacher. Funke goes on to contend that in 1913 Georgia, a bill was passed to create high schools in that state, and none of them were for children of African descent (Funke, 1920). Another example of the perpetuation of educational inequity and the achievement gap is the situation in Buffalo, New York in 1867, where the curriculum that was afforded to African American children (reading, writing, arithmetic, spelling, and grammar) differed greatly from the curriculum that was afforded to Anglo children; in addition to the basics, Anglo children were offered history, geography, and the option to attend high school (White, 1969). Freed African American children in the south often had to work in the fields during the day, which left them unable to attend school except on Sundays or at night, thus continuing the perpetuation of educational inequity and a gap in academic achievement due to the lack of adequate opportunity (Hallinan, 2001).

In 1954, *Brown v. the Board of Education* stated that “segregation of Negro and white children in the public schools of a state solely on the basis of race denies Negro children equal protection of the laws guaranteed by the Fourteenth Amendment even though the physical and other “tangible” facilities for Negro and white schools may be equal” (*Brown v. the Board of Education*, 1954). The *Brown v. the Board of Education* ruling drew attention to the substandard schooling opportunities that African American children had access to, but it also drew attention to the academic achievement gap between African American and Anglo children (Hallinan, 2001). Documentation of this achievement gap actually began in the 1960’s by different educational groups, but a group called the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) conducted the most significant surveys in 1970’s. Hallinan (Hallinan, 2001) shows NAEP data beginning in 1971 that shows that 9 year old African American children lag alarmingly behind Anglo children in the area of reading by at least 20 points, and that 17 year old African Americans scored at least 30 points lower than their Anglo counterparts.

It should be conceivable that the achievement gap has closed since 1971, considering that great strides have been made in the area of educating American children; however, this is not the case. Dreeben (in Darling-Hammond, 1995; 346) states that African American and Anglo children of comparable ability achieve at the same levels when given the same quality of instruction. This is not always the case. In 1987, Dreeben observed that African American children were not afforded the same quality of instruction as their Anglo counterparts. Slavin (Slavin, 1998) states that on the 1994 NAEP survey, 71% of Anglo 4th graders scored at or above basic reading level, whereas

31% of their African American counterparts scored at or above basic reading level. Skrla, Scheurich, Johnson, and Koschoreck (Skrla, Scheurich, Johnson, Jr., & Koschoreck, 2001) contend that African American children continue to lag significantly behind their Anglo counterparts in the areas of standardized test scores, high school graduation rates, college admission rates, and enrollment in advanced courses. NAEP data recorded in Hedges and Nowell concluded that the reading achievement gap between African American and Anglo children would be closed in 30 years, and the mathematics and science gap would be closed in a daunting 75 years (Hedges & Nowell, 1999).

Reasons for the Achievement Gap

Various scholars have identified many reasons for the achievement gap that exists between African American and Anglo children. Slavin (Slavin, 1998) states that the achievement gap exists because there is an equity gap in education. The equity gap relates to the opportunities that children are provided and to the outcomes that these same children achieve. Slavin continues by stating that children in lower income homes start school at a disadvantage because their families often have less access to quality day care, quality early childhood programs, and other kinds of support that middle class families often take for granted. Levine, Cooper, and Hilliard (Levine, Cooper, & Hilliard, III, 2000) identify the following as causes for the existence of the achievement gap: 1.) The lack of political will by stakeholders to close the gap 2.) A lack of belief in the capacity of children to learn 3.) The belief that intelligence is innate and that educational disparity is a fact of nature 4.) Economic disparity, and 5.) The cultural gap

that exists between teachers and children of color that results in lost learning opportunities. Hedges and Nowell (Hedges & Nowell, 1999) identify a similar but shorter list of factors that facilitate the achievement gap: 1.) Differences in social class 2.) Differences in family structure and functioning, and 3.) Discrimination against African Americans as a stigmatized group. Herrnstein and Murray (Herrnstein & Murray, 1994) contend that African American children have a genetic makeup that renders them less intelligent than Anglo American children, thus facilitating the academic achievement gap. The study by scholars Nicoladis, Taylor, Lambert, and Cazabon (Nicoladis et al., 1998) is one of the few known academic studies that refute the intelligence deficit theory in African American children-their study specifically deals with African American children who participate in dual language programs and their intelligence quotient in comparison to Anglo children.

Factors and Conditions That Create Academically Successful African American Learners

Whereas scholars have identified various reasons that impede African American children from being academically successful, there are also scholars and theorists who have identified key factors and conditions that are present for the African American children who are academically successful. Three areas that scholars agree upon as important factors that are present in the lives of academically successful African American learners are: 1.) Parental behaviors, 2.) Teacher behaviors, 3.) Student behaviors, and 4.) Family values and beliefs (Tucker et al., 2000; Yan, 1999; Murphy, 2003).

Most scholars agree that parent behaviors are paramount to academic success for all students. Tucker, Herman, Pedersen, Vogel, and Reinke (Tucker et al., 2000) contend that African American children who are academically successful agree that parental praise and encouragement, talking to the teachers regularly, and helping the children with homework are all instrumental components in their success. Yan (Yan, 1999) continues to emphasize the importance of the parent by contending that academically successful African American children have parents who engage in home discussion and dialogue on a frequent basis to ensure that the home environment was an emotionally secure environment conducive to successful learning and achievement. Sanders (in Yan, 1999) adds to the aforementioned list of factors by contending that academically successful African American children generally have parents who make an effort to promote a positive racial and ethnic socialization. Comer emphasizes the importance of parents being involved in the work of the school, and not just through discipline control, but also in regards to discussions about school organization, culture, teaching, and learning (Comer, 2005).

Teachers are also a component in assisting in a child's academic success or failure; teachers are an important component in the academic success of the African American child. Scholars document that academically successful African American children cite teacher patience, teachers who take extra time to explain a taught concept completely, teachers who ask questions to make sure that all students understand taught concepts, and teachers who are encouraging and give praise as important factors that help them to be academically successful (Tucker et al., 2000).

Another component that scholars agree on of importance to the academic achievement of African American children is the student behavior component. Academically successful African American children have been found to agree that in order to do well academically, it is important to pay attention in class, to study one's lessons on a regular basis, to use self talk as a basis for encouragement (this involves the student saying to himself or herself phrases such as, "I know I can"), and to avoid children who have the propensity to get in to trouble (Tucker et al., 2000).

The last component that scholars agree on of importance to academic achievement of African American children is the importance of the family's belief and values. Murphy contends that the beliefs and values and the overall quality of the family's interactions have an effect on student academic success. This is contrary, Murphy contends to what some say is conventional belief that causes this success, the formation of a two-parent family and the socio-economic status (Murphy, 2003). In other words, Murphy contends that it does not matter whether or not the student has a two-parent family or whether or not that family is middle or upper income; what matters is the way that the family feels regarding the importance of having a good education. Murphy goes on to emphasize the idea that African American parents have always held to the belief that their children's lives could be positively impacted by education, and African American parents have sought to assist their children in obtaining an education in every manner and at every level (Murphy, 2003).

The Connection Between the Achievement Gap and African American Children in Two-Way Immersion Language Programs

As previously noted, the varying reasons for the existence of an achievement gap between African and Anglo American children has been well documented (Hedges & Nowell, 1999; Herrnstein & Murray, 1994; and Levine, Cooper, & Hilliard, 2000). The achievement gap has been documented through various studies and tests of African and Anglo American children participating in different educational programs at different educational levels (elementary, middle, and high school) in English, the first language of both groups of children. Because of the existence of the achievement gap in educational programs that focus on learning skills and concepts in the different content areas in English, or, the native language, there is the question as to whether or not this same gap exists in educational programs that focus on learning skills and concepts in the different concept areas in a language other than English, or the second language. Singham (Singham, 1998) contends that the achievement gap can be eliminated if it is attacked from an educational, social, and psychological front. Nicoladis, Taylor, Lambert, and Cazabon (Nicoladis et al., 1998) showed evidence that African and Anglo American English speaking children perform at equal levels of academic achievement on reading and math tests in English and in Spanish (in some cases, the African American children outperformed the Anglo American children) when afforded the same opportunity. Therefore, the research done by scholars Nicoladis, Taylor, Lambert, and Cazabon suggests that an achievement gap between African and Anglo American children that participate in dual language programs should not exist when both groups are afforded the

same opportunities to learn. Other factors that exist to facilitate academic success in two-way immersion language programs for African American children have yet to be explored.

The Evolution of the Elementary Two-Way Immersion Language Program Via Bilingual Education

Early Bilingual Education

To understand the significance of the elementary two-way immersion program in the life of a monolingual child learning a second language in the United States, the history of this educational program must be re-visited. The following gives insight as to the different factors that were paramount in the evolution of the modern day elementary two-way immersion program in the United States.

Dual language education has its roots in bilingual education, and bilingual education has existed in many different forms in the United States since before this country's birth (Moran & Hakuta, 2001). A large majority of the early settlers of the United States were speakers of other languages. For this reason it can be easily understood why bilingualism was not only widespread in pre-colonial America; it was respected and appreciated (Fitzgerald, 1993). Early examples of first language instruction in languages other than English have been documented to have existed in colonial Pennsylvania among the German population, and in the Louisiana Territory with French speakers (Crawford, 2000).

Bilingual education in the first language led to the push for English language instruction, and the early English settlers often led this push. Efforts to maintain the

native language facilitated the way to private language schools for children who spoke other languages such as German, French, and Spanish (Crawford, 2000). Baker (2001) contends that in the latter part of the 19th century, bilingual education existed in the United States among Polish immigrants in Chicago's Catholic schools, as well as Norwegian and Dutch in other states in ethnic based schools.

Although protests to primary native language instruction and primary plus English language instruction persisted during this time (one of the most notable instances is Benjamin Franklin's objections to the German population of colonial Pennsylvania being educated in German, and conducting business in German), the English speaking population and the various linguistically diverse peoples of European ancestry usually managed to cohabitate in peace, and primary language instruction was permitted based on the unstated presumption that English was the language of the land (Crawford, 2000; Moran & Hakuta, 2001).

Wartime Fears and English Only

The early 1900's brought a change of attitude toward bilingualism, specifically, the education of America's children in any language other than English. English, the language of Anglo Americans, became associated with being patriotic and American (Fitzgerald, 1993). Because of the large numbers of new immigrants coming to the United States who did not speak English, and with the onset and termination of World War I, Anglo Americans became fearful that the United States would be taken over by foreigners speaking other languages (Crawford, 2000; Moran & Hakuta, 2001). With the onset of anti-immigrant sentiment came legislation requiring immigrants to be able

to speak English in order to become United States citizens (The Nationality Act of 1906), and by 1923, 34 states had legislation that prohibited public instruction in languages other than English (Fitzgerald, 1993). By the onset of World War II, Crawford (in Fitzgerald, 1993) notes that Japanese language schools were closed.

During this same time frame in Texas (the 1940's), a different concept of bilingual education was taking shape. According to Blanton (Blanton, 2004), Texas, in an effort to try to promote the Good Neighbor Act, decided that it might be prudent for all Texas schoolchildren to learn Spanish from third to eighth grade. Blanton notes that in Texas cities such as Corpus Christi and Austin, university professors and school administrators tried to teach Spanish to Anglo monolingual English speaking children via a "natural" method (Blanton, 2004). Blanton continues to note that this was an attempt to mend bridges between Anglo monolingual Texans and Spanish speaking Mexican Americans to make Texas a truly bilingual state. This experiment ended in the mid 1940's with the reiteration and support of the English only movement in education.

The Re-Introduction of Bilingual Education in the United States

English only instruction gradually began to be the instructional mode of the past during the 1950's and the early 1960's. Blanton notes that two indirect factors helped to facilitate the downfall of English only instruction: 1.) Challenges to educational segregation and, 2.) The evolution of language theory (Blanton, 2004). In 1958, the National Defense and Education Act was passed. This act promoted language learning in elementary and high schools, as well as at colleges and universities (Baker, 2001), however, the *Brown v. Board* legislation and well as the Civil Rights Act of 1964

opened the door for the re-introduction of Bilingual Education in American schools because both of these measures of legislation outlawed discrimination based on race, color, or national origin (Baker, 2001; Blanton, 2004). Genesee discusses three sociopolitical events that led to the emergence of bilingual education in the United States: 1.) The end of World War II, 2.) The Civil Rights Movement of the 1960's, and 3.) The Cuban revolution of 1958 (Genesee, 1987). The end of World War II brought the Sputnik era, and the thought that it was necessary that children could speak other languages. As previously stated, the onset of the Civil Rights Movement opened the door for the re-introduction of Bilingual Education. The Cuban Revolution of 1958 opened the door for a new kind of language learning in the United States.

The actual practice of educating children bilingually is documented to have begun again in 1963 by a group of highly educated Cuban exiles that believed that they were in the United States for a short time, and therefore, the need to know English and Spanish (Spanish to retain the mother tongue for the return to Cuba) was paramount (Baker, 2001). In fact, at the onset, the Dade County School System set up the Spanish language school for the children of the Cuban refugees. This would facilitate the continuity of the education for the children so that on the return to Cuba, no learning would be lost (Genesee, 1987). However, this endeavor led to the development of the first bilingual English-Spanish education program in the United States. The school that houses this program is known as Coral Way Elementary School and it is located in Florida. This particular program has been considered to be the pioneer bilingual/two-way immersion language school in the United States (Genesee, 1987).

Political, Economic, and Cultural Factors That Impact Two-Way Immersion Language Program Implementation in the United States

There are many two-way immersion language programs in the United States that have been modeled after the pioneer program in Florida as well as two-way immersion programs that have been modeled after the St. Lambert (Canada) program. Many of the programs that have been implemented in the United States have been highly successful due to the motivators that facilitated their implementation. These programs were implemented to address a variety of different factors. Some of these factors are politically motivated, some are economically motivated, and some are directed to address the need to emphasize the linguistic and cultural diversity in our society.

Throughout the United States, many English Language Learning students are offered placement in specialized language programs that are compensatory or remedial in description, and they are based on a linguistic, academic, and socio-cultural deficit model (Lindholm-Leary, 2001; Lara-Alecio et al., 2004). These programs satisfy the need of English-speaking citizens to promote quick acquisition of the English language, even though these programs (English as a Second Language Pull-Out, English Immersion, and transitional bilingual program models) are documented to promote mediocre academic success for the student (Alanis, 2000; Lara-Alecio et al., 2004). On the other hand, many of the two-way immersion language programs that have been implemented in the United States address the need to eliminate a minimalist approach to bilingual education by promoting academic achievement of two linguistic groups by educating both groups in both languages instead of learning one language at the expense

of losing another (Alanis, 2000). The aforementioned can be considered a political and an economic purpose for implementing a dual language program, addressing the educational needs of children of a certain language community while maintaining their cultural heritage through language. Kirk Senesac (Kirk Senesac, 2002) states that the leaders of business and industry in the United States decry the lack of linguistic and cultural literacy in our workforce. Kirk Senesac contends that this literacy is needed for our nation to survive a global economy, thus the need to implement two-way immersion language programs to address this void (Kirk Senesac, 2002).

More recently, many two-way immersion language programs have been implemented in different areas of the country to address continuing cultural, political, and economic concerns voiced by community members. One such school district is located in Albuquerque, New Mexico. This school district has implemented a two-way immersion language program to act as a magnet program to increase enrollment at a low income, neighborhood school, thus creating an integrated school (Armendariz & Armendariz, 2002). The program begins at kindergarten, and the language immersion class has a composition of monolingual English speaking students, monolingual Spanish speaking students, and bilingual (English and Spanish speaking) students. In regards to the monolingual English and Spanish speaking students, the program works to preserve, refine, and develop the native language while the child learns the second language. In regards to the bilingual child, the program strives to work on heritage recovery and/or retention while the English is simultaneously developed and refined (Armendariz & Armendariz, 2002).

Another such example of a school district developing a language program to address the cultural, political, and economic concerns of its community is the program developed in Framingham, Massachusetts. This school district has implemented a two-way bilingual education program to combat what it called social segregation and to attract middle class white children to the school (de Jong, 2002). The program is housed at an elementary school, and it begins at kindergarten and continues through the fifth grade. The class composition for students participating in the program is fifty percent of the students are native Spanish speakers, and fifty percent of the students are native English speakers. The program was designed using the 50/50 model, which indicates that fifty percent of the instruction is done in the native language and fifty percent of the instruction is done in the second language. The native English speakers are not immersed in Spanish for initial literacy development.

Another school district interested in addressing community concerns through the implementation of a language immersion program was in Houston, Texas. In 1997, this particular school district began the process of implementing several two-way immersion language programs district wide to address the concern that was voiced by the then superintendent that the bilingual programs at that time did not enhance academic achievement to the highest level (Thomas & Collier, 2004). Some of the schools in the district have implemented the 90/10 model (ninety percent of the instruction in the second language and ten percent of the instruction in the first language starting at kindergarten, and the level of instruction in each language increasing each year after kindergarten until it is either 50/50 or 90/10 reverse), and other schools in the district

have implemented the 50/50 model (this model is similar to the model implemented in Framingham) (Collier & Thomas, 2004).

Another two-way immersion language program, the Amigos program in Cambridge, Massachusetts, was implemented as the result of a collaborative effort of parents, teachers, and administrators who wanted to develop a program that would combine the best features of the transitional bilingual program (transitional bilingual is the kind of educational program that starts off by instructing the child in the native language for the first several years while increasing English with the goal of the child moving into total English, thereby losing the first language eventually) and a language immersion program for children who were native English speakers (Cazabon, Nicoladis, & Lambert, 1988). As with the program implemented in Framingham, Massachusetts, the intent of this language program was to develop Spanish skills for the English speaker, and develop English skills as well as preserve the heritage language and culture for the Spanish speaker (Cazabon, Nicoladis, & Lambert, 1988).

The Development of Canadian Two-Way Immersion Language Programs

Canadian Linguistic History

There are two-way immersion language programs that have also been developed and implemented in Canada to address some of the same social and economic factors. Although the United States does not have an official national language, it is one of the few countries in the world that Lyon contends has one language that is assumed to be the most important (Lyon, 1996). Canada, on the other hand, is one of the few countries where bilingualism is official policy; English and French have been given equal official

recognition from as far back as the Royal Proclamation Act of 1763 (Safty, 1988). Canada was first colonized by the French in 1534, and French control gave way to British control in 1763; however, French Canadian culture was so deeply rooted in North America at the time that the British took control and the French people were able to resist the efforts of assimilation by the British (Genesee, 1987). The Official Languages Act of 1969 enhanced the equality of the English and French languages in Canada by declaring that English and French were equal in status, rights, and privileges (Safty, 1988). In a review of the history of the development of bilingual education and dual language education in the United States, it is evident that the United States might have had dual language status for English and other languages such as French, German, or Spanish (Crawford, 2000). Bilingualism and dual language education efforts were thwarted in the United States and English became the major language spoken, and the language in which business was conducted due to citizens' fears of being invaded by other countries who spoke languages other than English (Crawford, 2000; Moran & Hakuta, 2001). Although dual status was afforded to the English and French languages in Canada, efforts to educate children to be bilingual in English and French were falling behind due to the antiquated language learning programs (Lambert & Tucker, 1972). This situation provided the ideal setting for the experiment that would become the model for modern language immersion programs.

The St. Lambert Experiment

Bilingualism and dual language education efforts in Canada have had different results than the earlier efforts in the United States due to the socio-political environment

in which it was introduced (Safty, 1988). Swain and Lapkin state that the first French immersion educational program was implemented in September 1965 in an English-speaking suburb of Montreal, Quebec (Swain & Lapkin, 2002). The development of this program was the result of English-speaking parents who pressured the local school board into setting up an intense French language immersion program for their children (Swain & Lapkin, 2002). Some of these parents had memories of participating in language programs as youngsters that dictated rote memorization and verb conjugation (Carey, 1984), other parents were impressed with the university research that showed what could be accomplished through learning two languages at an early age (Lambert & Tucker, 1972). All of the parents realized that by having their children participate in this particular language program, they would be participating in a larger social experiment demonstrating the democratic coexistence of people from different cultures and languages (Carey, 1984; Lambert & Tucker, 1972).

The initial language immersion program that was developed to be implemented in a school in a suburb outside of Montreal (also known as the St. Lambert experiment) as well as the other language immersion programs that were developed in Canada as a result of the St. Lambert experiment are known and documented for their success in educating two groups of language speakers in two different languages, French and English.

The purpose of the St. Lambert experiment was to promote functional bilingualism by using the French language as the mode of instruction (Lambert & Tucker, 1972). The steering committee made the decision that the experiment would

begin with a kindergarten and first grade group of children from English speaking homes, called the pilot class, with a group of kindergarteners in a follow up class in the fall of 1966. The participation in the program was voluntary, the setting for the program was in an all-English language Protestant elementary school, and at the end of the second year of program implementation (the end of the first grade year for the pilot class), the program would be carefully reviewed to measure student progress in French (Lambert & Tucker, 1972).

Factors That Promoted Successful Implementation of the St. Lambert Experiment

The St. Lambert experiment became the model for language immersion programs around the world. By the beginning of the 1982-1983 school year, the St. Lambert experiment had grown in size so that at least 90,000 Canadian children were participating in some kind of language immersion program throughout Quebec and the rest of Canada (Carey, 1984; Genesee, 1987).

The St. Lambert experiment was not without its problems; there were teachers, administrators, and school board members who did not favor the plan of placing monolingual English Canadian kindergarteners in a French speaking class, however, there were several factors that facilitated successful implementation of the St. Lambert experiment.

The first factor dealt with the parent enthusiasm regarding the program. These parents understood the necessity of their children to learn a second language (in the Canadian French children's instance, English, and in the Canadian English children's instance French). The parents understood this in a global context-that context being that

their children should be able to communicate and interact with the other group of children not just through business, but also through social events and everyday life (Lambert & Tucker, 1972; Carey, 1984; Genesee, 1987). Genesee describes the relationship between English and French Quebecois as “coexistence in two solitudes” meaning that the two cultures coexisted in peace and harmony, but rarely if ever interacted except on a need to know basis. The immersion program was to be the facilitator of improved relationships between English and French Quebecois, and thus breaking down the two solitudes (Genesee, 1987). These parents were able to verbalize the necessity of a viable language program for their children based on current research, and they were able to verbalize their negative experiences from their own participation in previous language programs. Although school officials did not want to try the program, the parents were able to force the issue because they were armed with research and conviction that the implementation of the new program would work.

The next factor dealt with research regarding language learning. The parent group that initiated the formulation of the program did their research in regards to language learning. They knew that the manner in which they learned language in the past would not be the answer for their children. They remembered the difficult times that they had with the antiquated language learning programs of the past (rote learning, verb conjugations, sentence structure rules, and passive participation with a lot of teacher talk). With the help of researchers from McGill University, they along with educators were able to design a program that promoted language learning in the most naturalistic (meaning that the classroom environment somewhat mimicked the language

environment of the outside world), communicative (which means that the language was learned as it was actually being used by the students with the teacher as a facilitator), and active (the children were not passive participants as students had been in the past) setting inside the classroom so that the second language would be acquired easily (Lambert & Tucker, 1972; Carey, 1984).

The last factor that facilitated the implementation of a successful language immersion program in St. Lambert was the fact that the researchers from McGill University designed a systematic evaluation for the implementation, start up, and maintenance of the program (Carey, 1984). The evaluation process would ensure a successful implementation and continuation of the program and thus ensure that the children participating in the program would be successful.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted to examine perceptions of possible factors that lead to academic success for English proficient African American children who participate in elementary two-way immersion language programs. The two research questions that guided this study were:

- 1.) What are the positive factors that parents and students perceive to be the reasons for academic success of African American children who participate in two-way immersion language programs?
- 2.) What do the parents and students perceive as challenges that had to be overcome in order for African American children who participate in elementary two-way immersion language programs to be successful?

Participants

This study was a naturalistic study that took place in an urban school district located on the Texas Coast. This area was chosen because it has a diverse background racially, ethnically, linguistically, and socio-economically. The school that the sample came from mirrors the diversity of the specified school district. Purposeful sampling was used. The participants in the sample were six African-American fourth and fifth grade students who are currently participating in the elementary two-way immersion language program at the specified school in the specified urban school district. The participants for the sample were selected based on the following criteria: 1.) Their overall academic achievement in the areas of reading and math for the 2005-2006 school

year, and, 2.) Their TAKS scores from the 2005-2006 year. Overall reading and math achievement as well as TAKS scores were used as criteria because high academic achievement in these two areas would indicate that the students are experiencing academic success as measured by district and state standards. The passing standard as set by the district for overall reading and math scores is a seventy percent or a “C” average. The minimum passing standard for the TAKS scores as set by the state of Texas is 2100. All of the students participating in the study scored well above the minimum passing standard set by the district and the state.

Three boys and three girls along with one primary caregiver for each child were selected. A pilot study was conducted by the researcher under the direction of the faculty advisor to ensure validity of the research. The pilot study was conducted through the use of one student and primary caregiver (this student and primary caregiver were not a part of the study) in an audio taped interview session. The questions used in the pilot study were derived from the theoretical framework (the theoretical framework is detailed in the research design/data collection). Once the pilot study was conducted with a student and primary caregiver, the researcher was then able to review and revise pilot questions to formulate concrete open-ended questions that would yield responses applicable to the study.

Research Design/Data Collection

The researcher conducted two to three individual student audio taped interviews for each student and three audio taped primary caregiver interviews for each primary caregiver. The interviewer covered a specified set of topics for each different interview.

The interviews were structured interviews consisting of open-ended questions. This kind of interview lends itself to providing greater breadth than do other types due to its qualitative nature (Fontana & Frey, 2005). The topics that were covered in the interviews correlate with research that deals with the following primary caregiver (parent) themes: the impact of the parent's educational level on the child's education (Fitzgerald, Spiegel, & Cunningham, 1991; Hart & Risley, 1992; Murphy, 2003), the parent's personal attitude regarding school and how this impacts the academic success of the child (Murphy, 2003), the impact of the parent's attitude on the child's education (Halle, Kurtz-Costes, & Mahoney, 1997; Tucker et al., 2000), and the impact of the parent's attitude toward the child being bilingual (Lambert & Tucker, 1972; Genesee, 1987; Carey, 1984). The student themes that were covered dealt with the impact of student attitude on student academic success (Tucker, Herman, Pedersen, Vogel, & Reinke, 2000; Hwang, Echols, & Vrongistinos, 2002), the impact of the child's attitude on bilingualism and the importance of being bilingual (Griego-Jones, 1994; Christian, 1996; Hayashi, 1998), and how he or she feels regarding being bilingual (Griego-Jones, 1994; Christian, 1996; Hayashi, 1998).

Parental Educational Level, Parental Attitude Regarding School, and the Impact on the Child

There has been much research regarding the parent's academic level and the role that it takes in regards to student academic success. Some scholars have documented that the education of the parent has a positive impact on the child's academic success (Fitzgerald et al., 1991; Hart & Risley, 1992). These scholars feel that if the parent has a

high literacy level, then they place a high level of importance on their child's academic success. This would indicate that these parents would do what is necessary to ensure that their children are successful academically. There has also been research that documents that parental level of education has no bearing on the academic success of the child, the parents values and attitudes regarding the importance of being educated has an impact on the child and the academic success of the child (Murphy, 2003). Scholars document that students feel that it is important that parents help them with schoolwork, and that they should praise and encourage them. When these factors are in place, the children do well. This, the students and scholars feel, is what has a positive impact on academic success (Halle, Kurtz-Costes, & Mahoney, 1997; Tucker et al., 2000).

Parental Attitude in Regards to Bilingualism and Being Bilingual

A parent's attitude toward his or her child being bilingual can impact how the child feels about being bilingual, and how the child feels regarding participating in a two-way immersion program. Several scholars recount the fervor and excitement that the parent group had in regards to the formation of the first group of students entering the St. Lambert experiment (Lambert & Tucker, 1972; Carey, 1984; Genesee, 1987). These parents' excitement regarding the implementation of the two-way immersion program in their community positively impacted the attitudes of the community of St. Lambert, of Quebec, of Canada, and ultimately the attitudes of different countries such as the United States. In many communities where two-way immersion implementation is impending, parents and community members often have positive views in regards to bilingualism and the need for all to be bilingual. This is the case that has been documented in

southern Ontario; parents and community members see more advantages economically and culturally to being bilingual. This ultimately has a positive impact on the children who participate in two-way immersion programs (Nagy, 1998).

The Impact of Student Attitude on Student Academic Success

How a student feels about school and learning has been documented to be an important factor in determining student academic success. Ogbu (2004) contends that African American children often will purposely do poorly academically for fear of being labeled “white” or “acting white” by their African American peers. This might indicate that in particular, African American children must have a positive attitude regarding school, and what it takes to be academically successful in school. Children with positive attitudes about school often make positive choices when placed in situations that could have a negative effect on their schooling. They are quick to ask for help if necessary, they view their teachers and their parents as allies, and they tend to avoid situations and students who do not have the same kind of positive view of school that they have (Tucker et al., 2000; Hwang et al., 2002). Edwards contends that students who have positive attitudes toward school have had many good school experiences such as participating in different contests, receiving awards, participating in sports, taking class trips, and positive interactions with teachers (Edwards, 1976).

The Impact of the Child's Attitude on Being Bilingual and the Child's Attitude About Being Bilingual

There is a lot to be said in regards to how a child feels about learning a second language. One scholar has documented a group of elementary children, specifically

ELL's who were quite excited about learning their second language. This excitement, however, was due to their perceptions about English being the language that represents power, prestige, and education (Griego-Jones, 1994). This is often the case in transitional bilingual programs such as the transitional program that Hayashi (1998) examined. Students who were studied by Hayashi participated in either a transitional bilingual program or a two-way immersion program. The students in the transitional programs felt that it was not necessary for them to receive instruction in Spanish because that was their native language. This underscored the perception that they felt that one language had importance over the other (Hayashi, 1998).

In learning environments where both languages are perceived to have equal importance, the child often has a more positive attitude regarding being bilingual and learning a second language. In the two-way immersion program, both languages have equal importance, even though the outside world may perceive one language as the language of more importance. In the same study of transitional bilingual and two-way students, Hayashi found that students in the two-way immersion program valued both languages, and saw the necessity to achieve academically in both (Hayashi, 1998), thus validating the equality of the importance of learning two languages.

Duration of the Interviews

Each student interview session lasted from thirty to forty-five minutes with a total duration of two hours minimum for each child. There were at minimum two interview sessions for each child. If clarification regarding particular answers was needed, a third interview session was called. Each primary caregiver interview lasted

from forty-five minutes to an hour each session for a total duration of at least three hours minimum for each primary caregiver. There was a minimum of three interview sessions for each primary caregiver. If clarification was needed regarding particular answers during previous interviews, a fourth interview was then called for clarification purposes. The duration for the entire data collection process was a minimum of sixty hours.

Data Analysis

The collected data was analyzed using the constant comparative method. Glaser and Strauss (in Merriam, 1998) note that the constant comparative method calls for the utilization of categories, properties, and hypotheses that are conceptual links between and among the categories and properties. The basic strategy in using this method is to compare different instances and incidents from the interview. (Merriam, 1998) Using this method, the researcher was able to categorize answers according to prevalent themes that emerged utilizing a coding system.

Trustworthiness

A triangulation process was utilized to gain a holistic understanding of the data. Included in the triangulation process was utilizing member checks and clarifying all answers that appeared to be unclear to the researcher, the utilization of peer examination for purposes of clarity and understanding, and clarifying all of the researcher's biases at the onset of the study.

CHAPTER IV

DATA ANALYSIS

Introduction

This study was a naturalistic study that took place in an urban school district on the Texas Coast. In an effort to gather data, the researcher interviewed six children and their primary caregivers to investigate perceptions that the children and their caregivers had that could lead to academic success for African American Students who participate in two-way immersion programs.

Ten primary caregiver interview questions and nine student interview questions were used in the study. The questions were formulated by the researcher under the supervision of the faculty advisor. The questions were open ended, structured questions formulated according to the theoretical framework previously discussed in chapter III.

This chapter will review the procedure for the data collection, review the data analysis of the study, and identify themes that emerged as a result of this research study. The themes that emerged were supported by literature reviewed in the previous chapters of this study.

Procedure for Data Collection

Once permission was granted to the researcher by the university to conduct the study, the researcher contacted the school district central office representative in charge of testing and data. A meeting was arranged and the researcher met with the district representative to present the research proposal orally and in writing. When permission was given by the school district to conduct the study, the representative contacted the

appropriate elementary school for the study. After the district representative conferred with the principal of the school where the study was to take place, the school principal then contacted the researcher so that arrangements could be made to obtain permission from primary caregivers of potential participants.

The school principal gave suggestions for possible participants for this study. The school principal based her suggestions on the following criteria that had been previously defined by the researcher: the students' overall academic achievement in the areas of reading and math for the present year, and based on their TAKS scores for the previous year. All of the students had been identified as children of African American decent. Consent forms were given to the school principal by the researcher, and the principal sent home consent forms to the primary caregivers of the possible participants. Participants and their primary caregivers were directed to contact the researcher by telephone to set up interview times and locations. All participants and their caregivers were eager to participate in the study.

All of the interviews were audio recorded and then transcribed. Each participant was given a code name for anonymity. After all transcriptions were completed, the transcriptions were divided into two groups: the caregiver interviews and the student interviews. The researcher and three peers reviewed both groups of transcriptions for common themes that might have arisen that would answer the questions posed at the onset of the study. The researcher utilized three peers in the process of triangulation so that all responses by participants were understood or clarified if necessary through a clarification interview by the interviewer and the participant.

Analysis of Interview Data

Primary Caregiver Interview Analysis

The interviews from the primary caregivers were analyzed first. One caregiver has two children participating in the two-way program at the same time, but at different grade levels. Both children were interviewed. The caregivers are from varied educational backgrounds; however, all finished high school. All but one of the caregivers is the primary parent (the primary caregiver of girl four was her grandmother). Four of the caregivers have some rudimentary knowledge of Spanish or another language due to the fact that either their own ethnicity is Hispanic (Caregiver of Girl Two), or the secondary caregiver is of an ethnic background other than African American (Filipino, the husband of Caregiver of Boy One; and African decent born in Barbados, the former husband of Caregiver of Girl and Boy Three), or they have taken high school and college Spanish courses (Caregiver of Girl One and Caregiver of Boy One). Table 1 gives demographic information on the primary caregiver and identifies code name, educational background, and job description.

Table 1. Demographic Data of Primary Caregivers Participating in the Study

Code Name	Educational Background	Job Description
CG1	College Bachelor Degree	Middle School Teacher
CG2	High School Diploma	School Teacher's Aide
CG3 and CB3	High School Diploma	Homemaker
CG4	High School Diploma	Homemaker
CB1	College Master's Degree	State Parole Officer

The demographic data is mentioned to illustrate the varied educational backgrounds that the primary caregivers come from. It has been mentioned in this report that there are scholars who have documented that the educational level of the parent has a positive impact on the child's academic success (Fitzgerald et al., 1991; Hart & Risely, 1992). They also contend that if the parent has a high literacy level, they place a high level of emphasis on their child's academic success. As illustrated in this research, all of the caregivers have a high school diploma, two of the five have college degrees, however, all place a high level importance on the level of academic success of their children in the first and second language, and all have the attitudes and values documented by Murphy (2003) that have a positive impact on a child's academic success.

Primary Caregiver Question One. Are you bilingual?

None of the caregivers stated that they were bilingual. Caregiver of girl two (CG2) conceded that she is Hispanic, and that Spanish is her culture. As CG2 states:

CG2: “The important thing about Spanish to me is that it is my culture.

Unfortunately, my mother never, she didn’t bring us up that way. The only words that we learned were not appropriate for school, not appropriate for conversation with other people. So when this program first started, that why I was looking at my children, my younger children would be able to go into the work to have some kind of an advantage.”

Researcher: “So you were not brought up speaking Spanish?”

CG2: “No, it’s my culture, though.”

Caregiver of boy one (CB1) states that she is not bilingual, but she did indicate that her child is exposed to Tagalog because of his father, who is Filipino:

CB1: “He does speak, he has another language.”

Researcher: Yes.

CB1: “But he doesn’t speak it. He understands it.”

Primary caregiver question two was skipped. Although several of the caregivers indicated that they may have understood rudimentary Spanish, none of the caregivers indicated that they were bilingual.

Primary Caregiver Question Three. You obviously feel that being bilingual is important.

Why do you feel that it is important for your child to be bilingual?

All of the caregivers verbalized the importance of their children being able to communicate with fluency in a second language, and for this group of caregivers, the language is Spanish.

Researcher C. W. Vance (2004) comments on the importance of monolingual English speakers being able to communicate with fluency in languages other than English. Vance states that this is important because of the development of globalization and the increase of democratic rule worldwide (2004). Scholars Gardner and Padilla & Sung (in Lindholm-Leary, 2001) contend that the parents that they interviewed emphasized the importance of the child being bilingual in order to further education and career options. These themes are echoed in the responses from caregiver of girl one (CG1), caregiver of girl two (CG2), and CB1, who cite the increased number of Spanish speakers who have moved to the United States and the immediate community. Caregiver of girl four (CG4) and CB3/CG3 noted the need to be bilingual when applying for a job. As CB3/CG3 notes,

Researcher: “You obviously feel that it is important to be bilingual. So, why do you feel it is important for your children to be bilingual?”

CG3/CB3: The reason I feel that it is important for uh, then to be bilingual is their way of communicating, their way of gaining more knowledge about different languages and being able to communicate will enable them eventually, in the future to go to a higher degree, in a higher degree of education and level and be able to um, translate or just to be able to know the language and communicate in case of an emergency or uh, just in talking.”

In a similar response, CB1 relates the following:

Researcher: “Can you describe, in detail how you feel that being educated in a two way immersion program will help your child?”

CB1: “Um, it will help him not only in personal and professional, as well as educational because, um, personally like I said, the majority is now turning to, where the majority of the population is sp..., is Hispanic.”

Researcher: “Mm hmm.”

CB1: Where he can communicate with a lot of Hispanic friends,”

Researcher: “Mm, hmm.”

CB1: “That he got, that got into the program that didn’t speak English.”

The previous statements are indicative that the parents feel that it is important for different language communities to move past the “coexistence in two solitudes” that researcher Fred Genesee (1987) speaks about to becoming an inclusive society of different linguistic communities.

Primary Caregiver Question Four. Tell in detail the different things that motivated you to enroll your child in a two-way language immersion program.

Parental attitude towards bilingualism and being bilingual has been documented to have an impact on the child participation in two-way immersion programs. Nagy (1998) contends that when parents and community members acknowledge the economic and cultural advantages to being bilingual, the impact on the students is positive.

Motivation for enrollment in the program ties directly to parental attitude towards bilingualism and being bilingual. Researchers following the St. Lambert experiment

documented the underlying motivators that prompted parents to enroll their children in two-way programs, the main one being that these children would be able to communicate with another language group for business and everyday life (Lambert & Tucker, 1972; Carey, 1984; Genesee, 1987; Lindholm-Leary, 2001), thus demonstrating the fact that these parents viewed participation in such a language program was a positive move that would lead to economic and social gains.

The aforementioned motivators are reflected in some of the parental responses for question four. Of the five parents, three indicated that their children had been exposed somewhat to a language other than English through familial ties (CB1's husband is Filipino and speaks Tagalog, CG2 identifies herself as a Mexican American who does not have any type of fluency in Spanish, and CG3/CB3 indicated that the father of her two children is from Barbados and speaks Spanish), thus underscoring the desire to have the children become literate in a second language in the social and personal arena. As CG3/CB3 recounts:

Researcher: "Um, tell in detail, just give me some details, about the different things that might have motivated you to enroll both of your children in this two-way immersion program."

CG3/CB3: "What motivated me was at the time I was married and my husband was from Barbados and he spoke like uh, broken English, but he did speak some Spanish and I wanted them to be able to have a part of his culture also. And, uh, that's why I enrolled them in there, and plus with Spanish being, like, a second

language for them I felt that was also important that they would learn Spanish and be able to communicate like if they go back.”

Researcher: “Mm hmm.”

CG3/CB3: “Home, you know.”

Researcher: “Yes.”

CG3/CB3: “With his family and stuff like that.”

CB1 had a similar response to the question posed:

Researcher: “OK, tell in detail, the different things that motivated you to enroll your child in a two-way language immersion program.”

CB1: “Well, uh, number one, because he does speak, he has another language...”

Researcher: “Mm hmm.”

CB1: “But he doesn’t speak it. He does understand it.”

Researcher: “Mm hmm.”

CB1: “But, uh, number two, just to further his education, to learn something else that can help him in the end, in the future anyway. Um, and it also ties in with his original language...it is kind of bordering on Spanish.”

Researcher: “Mm hmm.”

CB1: “So it helps him understand it anyway even though he doesn’t speak it.”

Other responses given by the caregivers indicated that they feel that it is best for the children to begin to learn a second language at a young age because of the ease of learning a second language at a young age. As CG4 contends:

Researcher: “Tell me in detail the different things that motivated you to enroll your granddaughter in the two-way immersion program.”

CG4: “Because I felt like by her being young she had more opportunity at being able to make progress being at a young age she could understand it better.”

Researcher: “Uh, huh.”

CG4: “And she could catch on with it and you know learn to talk it.”

Researcher: “Um, OK, at what age and grade did she start?”

CG4: (CG4 asks G4) “Um, what were you, Pre-K, kindergarten, but you were five so it was kindergarten.”

Another motivator that was reflected in caregiver responses was the accessibility and or the proximity/location of the program. As CG1 relates:

Researcher: “OK, well tell me in detail the different things that motivated you to enroll your child in a two-way language immersion program.”

CG1: “Um one thing was because of the benefits of her being bilingual and the accessibility, it was accessible in my town.”

Researcher: “Um, hmm.”

CG1: “Um so of course when I had the opportunity presented to me with so many links right in my face of course I couldn’t pass it up.”

Researcher: “Um, hmm.”

CG1: “And I feel my children are smart enough they are bright enough to participate in a program like this because this was a learning program where they

would not be speaking, um, that much English. I felt my children could benefit from this. They were smart enough and it was so accessible.”

Primary Caregiver Question Five. Can you describe in detail how you feel that being educated in a two-way immersion program will help your child?

Inclination of how being enrolled in a two-way language immersion program would help the child goes back to the motivators of what makes the parents enroll their children in a two-way language immersion program. The importance of being able to communicate with non-English speaking peers surfaces in the responses of four out of the five caregivers. As related in the discourse by CG1:

Researcher: “OK, um can you describe in detail how you feel that being educated in a two-way immersion program will help your child.”

CG1: “Um, yes, uh as I was stating, I feel that the two-way immersion program will help my child compete in a job market and it will help my child um excel in upper level classes in upper level grades.

Researcher: “Um, hmm.”

CG1: “ It will help my child socially because she will be able to broaden her horizon, she will be able to experience um other cultures.”

Researcher: “Um, hmm.”

CG1: “She will be able to experience other friendships where she goes there’s not a language barrier.”

Researcher: “So in others, I didn’t mean to interrupt you...”

CG1: “Oh, no...”

Researcher: “But in other words she has friends who are English speaking...”

CG1: “And Spanish speaking.”

Researcher: “Oh.”

CG1: “And she actually has non English speaking students um friends because they’re trying to learn English.”

Researcher: “Um.”

CG1: “But there’s no language barrier there so they can actually communicate so I believe that this program helps my daughter not just academically but socially.”

The aforementioned portion of the discussion with CG1 relates to the research documented from the St. Lambert experiment where the parents saw the cultural advantages of participating in a two-way language program (Nagy, 1998).

Another advantage voice by four out of the five caregivers (CG1, CG2, CG3/CB3, CB1) was the economic advantage or, education leading to a wider opportunity for jobs. Again, Nagy (1998) contends that parents and community members see more advantages economically and culturally to being bilingual. CG2 states:

Researcher: “You have kind of touched on this answer, but I’m about to ask you the question, but I’d like for you to touch on it again. Describe in detail how you feel that being educated in a two-way program will help your child.”

CG2: “I think more than anything else, when they get in college, they will have a better advantage and when they get out into the working field which the only things I encourage...”

Researcher: “Um, hmm.”

CG2: “They are to go for the career and not just a job and they already know that.”

Researcher: “Um, hmm.”

CG2: “They have, they, I believe that they have most of it,”

Researcher: “Um, hmm.”

CG2: “Of any children, not just in our community, but the district, we’re in poverty level, that’s where we live...”

Researcher: “Um, hmm.”

CG2: “And that’s what we know. And I need them to know I’ve always wanted them to have better...”

Researcher: “Yes...”

CG2: “And as long as they continue with their education and as long as they continue with this other language, they can do better things after college.”

This same type of answer was echoed during the discussion with CB1.

Researcher: “Can you describe in detail how you feel that being educated in a two way immersion program will help your child?”

CB1: “Um, it will help him not only in personal and professional, as well as educational because, um, personally like I said, the majority is now turning to, where the majority of the population is Hispanic.”

Researcher: “Um, hmm.”

CB1: “He can communicate with a lot of Hispanic friends that he got, that got into the program that didn’t speak English.”

Researcher: “Yes.”

CB1: “As far as they tried to do the buddy system to help him with the Spanish and he helped them with the English. As far as job wise, that I’m assuming by the time he’s time to do jobs...”

Researcher: “Um, hmm...”

CB1: “It will be required for him to know some type of language, and with Spanish predominately out there, that we would be going with the predominant one.”

Researcher: “Yes, you are right.”

CB1: “Um, education wise, I mean, it is always awesome to learn something new...”

Researcher: “Um, hmm.”

CB1: “And like I said now, with him starting that at this age, that if he chose he could minor in Spanish or major in Spanish...”

Researcher: “Yes.”

CB1: “You know, teach Spanish class you know, as a job while going to school, I mean, it could help him all the way around. And that was really what we were, we were looking at the outcome and the future.”

Researcher: “Yes.”

Primary Caregiver Question Six. Describe in detail some of the things that you do to actively involve yourself in your child's education.

Question six alludes to how the parents feel about school and education in general. Murphy (2003) contends that the parent's values and attitudes regarding the importance of being educated have a significant impact on the child and the academic success of the child. This might indicate that if the parents actively participate in the child's education (for example, attending parent-teacher conferences, having informal meetings with the teacher on a regular basis to review student progress), the child is likely to succeed academically in school.

In this study, all of the primary caregivers indicated that they did participate in the child's educational process to some degree. All indicated that they participated in the school's parent-teacher organization (CG1 indicated that she was a PTO officer at one time), and four of the five caregivers indicated that they did participate in the Spanish lessons that were being offered to the parents of the two-way immersion students at the local college, free of charge. As CG4 states:

Researcher: "And, you know what kind of parent activities did the parents participate in?"

CG4: "Well I, I done participated in practically everything at the school that they ever had."

Researcher: "Um, hmm."

CG4: "You know, at the elementary school, and at the high school because of my daughter at the high school..."

Researcher: “Um, hmm.”

CG4: “So, I, I’ve experiencing all kind of activities with the kids you know during the holidays, not only the holidays, during the school year and PTO, anything they have at the school I’ll put it like this, I’m, I’m there.”

CG1 relates the following in response to the same question:

Researcher: “I need to clarify a previous question that I asked you. I asked you a question regarding kinds of activities that you involve yourself in to stay involved in the education of your child and you said that you attended Spanish classes at the college.

CG1: “Yes, that true. I did attend beginning Spanish classes.”

Researcher: “Is there anything else that you would like to add? I want to specifically know what else do you do to involve yourself in your child’s education?”

CG1: “Well, I was in PTO when she was in third grade. Well, I am in PTO every year, but when she was in third grade, I was an officer.”

Researcher: “And what else?”

CG1: “I do status checks regarding her academic progress via e-mail. I also go and visit her teacher regularly to check her progress.”

Researcher: “Can you clarify what is meant by regularly?”

CG1: “I visit in person at least twice a month.”

Researcher: “Thank you.”

CG2 responds to the same question by saying the following:

Researcher: “ don’t remember if I clearly asked you a question regarding activities that you do to involve yourself in your child’s education.”

CG2: “We formed a parent group and we tried to meet once or twice a month. We also formed a buddy mail out system so that we could mail out translations of the homework because some of us were more fluent in English. One of the things that is offered here again is Spanish class for the English speaking parents and English class for the Spanish speaking parent.”

Researcher: “Are there some other things that you do as an individual parent?”

CG2: “I do conference with the teacher since I am here, since I work here. Especially if there is something that I do not understand. It is easier for me to just talk to her teacher.”

Primary Caregiver Question Seven. You have elected to place your child in an educational program where he/she is not being educated in his/her first language. What kinds of activities do you do with your child to ensure that your child is successfully learning in the second language? and Primary Caregiver Question Eight. Can you tell in detail about the extra activities that you make sure that your child is involved in to ensure that he/she is learning in the second language?

The two preceding questions deal with the impact of parental attitude on the child’s education, but in particular, how the parent feels about the child being bilingual. Again, it is documented by scholars (Lambert & Tucker, 1972; Carey, 1984; Genessee, 1987; Nagy, 1998) that a positive parental attitude has a positive impact on how the child feels about being bilingual. Ultimately, if the child feels that it is important to be

bilingual, they will feel the necessity to achieve academically in both languages (Hayashi, 1998). Obviously, if the parent sees the importance of the child being bilingual, the parent will be more likely to participate in activities to promote the child's bilingualism.

Question seven specifically deals with regular routine activities that the child does on a daily basis to maintain fluency in the second language. Although all of the caregivers stated initially that they had little or no fluency in Spanish, they all appeared to be diligent in making sure that the children did some type of daily activity after school in Spanish which again, reinforces the importance of having total fluency in a second language. Among these activities all caregivers stated that their children watch one of the Spanish language television stations, and they usually watched it with sibling(s). Most of the time, the children attempted to translate to siblings who do not understand Spanish. Other activities include talking on the telephone with Spanish speaking friends, reading stories, recipes, or food items in the grocery store to the caregiver in Spanish and translating what they have read. This is demonstrated in the response to the question by CG3/CB3:

Researcher: "OK. Now you have elected to place your children in a program where they're not educated in English, they're being educated in Spanish."

CG3/CB3: "Mm, hmm."

Researcher: "So what kinds of activities do you do with your children to ensure that they're keeping up in their Spanish?"

CG3/CB3: “Well, sometime, uh, we buy them different types of food, we look at the instructions and I might have them read the instructions that they have in Spanish. Sometime, um, television, they watch some Spanish channels, and, and uh, look at the cartoons mainly.”

Researcher: “Mm hmm.”

CG3/CB3: “I think that when it comes on in the morning time and also they have the little CD roms that they get from the school...”

Researcher: “Mm hmm...”

CG3/CB3: “That they go over like, with the reading and uh, I think son, it’s the reading that ya’ll had?”

Boy 3 (B3): “Uh, huh.”

CG3/CB3: “Yeah, the reading and the math, you know, math is just English, but that’s what we do.”

Researcher: “Yeah, yeah.”

CG3/CB3: “Yeah, and they have books in Spanish. They have Spanish books that we, that the school gave away, that was free.”

Researcher: “Mm hmm.”

CG3/CB3: “That they utilize sometime. I have a grandbaby that they’re trying to teach her Spanish just by speaking it to her.”

CB1 responds to the same question by saying:

CB1: “Basically, we’ll watch the Spanish channel with him and little games and stuff they play and he’ll have to tell me what is going on.”

Researcher: “Uh huh.”

CB1: “But other than that, there’s really nothing.”

The following is the response given by CG1:

Researcher: “OK, you have elected to place your child in an educational program where she’s not being educated in her first language. What I would like to know is I would like to know something about the different activities that you do with your child to ensure that she is successfully learning, successfully learning in her second language.”

CG1: “OK. Um with my child um, of course she is a native English speaker, however, she is learning Spanish...”

Researcher: “So how is she or, what do you do, what are the extra things that you do to make sure she is learning her Spanish?”

CG1: “Uh, we read, she has to read to me in both Spanish and English, she has to read to me in Spanish and interpret it in English. She also has to read to me in English and interpret it to Spanish...”

Researcher: “Um.”

CG1: “Yes, um she has to tell me what these stories mean.”

Researcher: “Um, hmm.”

CG1: “She has to tell me the differences in what’s happening in a sentence in English.”

Researcher: “Um, hmm.”

CG1: “And what’s different in what’s happening in Spanish so she can understand what’s actually going on.”

Researcher: “Um, hmm.”

CG1: “Um, she has to um watch the Spanish station...”

Researcher: “Um, hmm.”

CG1: “And at our home, um, there will be a time set say an hour she can’t speak English for that whole hour...”

Researcher: “Who does she talk Spanish to?”

CG1: “She is she just speaks it to me...”

Researcher: “Um, hmm.”

CG1: “Even if I cannot understand her, she still has to speak Spanish, well, now we have the younger sibling...”

Researcher: “Um, hmm.”

CG1: “And of course she has an older sibling that’s taking basic Spanish, however, she has, she helps her with her homework.”

Researcher: “OK.”

CG1: “She helps her with her homework, but she has to show me something she learned today in, in Spanish...”

Researcher: “Um, hmm.”

CG1: “She has to demonstrate, because if she can teach it like the teacher taught it to her, then, that means that she actually learned it.”

Question eight specifically targets extra curricular activities that are done outside of the regular daily routine to ensure that the children experience fluency in the second language. For example, CG1 indicates that her child participates in a dance and singing group. She recounts the following:

Researcher: “OK, um so we talked about, let’s see, those are just activity activities, what the extra curricular, or extra activities that you involve her in to make sure she’s keeping up her Spanish?”

CG1: “Um, she is involved in the dance group...”

Researcher: “Um hmm...”

CG1: “When they do uh, anything they participate in like the PTO,”

Researcher: “And?”

CG1: “And they do something with the bilingual program, she participates in it, like if they are singing in Spanish,”

Researcher: “And?”

CG1: “Yes, and also she has that, I have tapes of her doing the Spanish dances and they went to UTMB...”

Researcher: “Um, hmm.”

CG1: “I taped her um, to show her that she’s involved in another culture.”

Researcher: “Yes.”

CG1: “This is a different culture, but this culture is something that has become a part of you...”

Researcher: “Um, hmm.”

CG1: “Because she is bilingual now.”

Researcher: “Um, hmm.”

CG1’s response is not indicative of the responses of the other caregivers; indeed, the other caregivers indicated that their children were involved in nothing extra that helps them to maintain fluency in Spanish. Three of the caregivers did indicate that they wished that there were some type of formal program that their children could have access to as to maintain fluency in Spanish. CG4 contends the following:

CG4: “You know, and she really, I feel like you know, they really need to have something to keep them going, you know, during the summer months.”

Researcher: “Um, hmm...”

CG4: “Cause she already knows English...”

Researcher: “Um, hmm...”

CG4: “You know, this one, she learning,”

Researcher: “Um, hmm...”

CG4: “So I feel like instead of spending so much time with the English, they should spend more time with them ...”

Researcher: “Um, hmm...”

CG4: “You know, the bilingual.”

Researcher: “Yes.”

CB1 is more vocal in her statement regarding the need for a program outside of the school day to help maintain her child’s Spanish fluency:

Researcher: “OK. And what about, um, other extra activities?”

CB1: “As far as in Spanish?”

Researcher: “Um, hmm.”

CB1: “Or, English and Spanish?”

Researcher: “Spanish.”

CB1: “Actually, we don’t have, and you know, the strangest thing about it is I don’t know beyond this school and this program, because nobody, nobody else has, there is nothing, you know, that he can, that I know of that we can send him to.”

Researcher: “Um, hmm.”

CB1: “You know, like a camp, where they can do fun things like that.”

Researcher: “Um, hmm.”

CB1: “You know, Spanish camp and stuff like that. And there’s not charter school here that teach the Spanish.”

Researcher: “Um, hmm.”

CB1: “Like in Houston. What I’m hearing about.”

Researcher: “Well, like in Houston, they you know, have like Japanese school.”

CB1: “Exactly!”

Researcher: “For kids who are of Japanese decent.”

CB1: “Right.”

Researcher: “They go on Saturdays. They do activities in Japanese.”

CB1: “Exactly!”

Researcher: “But our city is so small.”

CBI: “And there is really no participation.”

The aforementioned responses indicate that there is an absence of activities in the community geared toward the elementary child, more specifically, the African American child participating in a two-way language immersion program. The responses might suggest that if there were activities available, the caregivers would possibly insist that the children participate. The responses also suggest that even though there is an absence of the said activities for this unique group of language learners, this does not keep them from maintaining fluency in their second language or achieving academically.

Primary Caregiver Question Nine. What kinds of activities do you do with your child to ensure that your child is maintaining his/her first language?

This question deals directly with the attitude of the parent toward the child’s education and the impact that parent’s attitude has on the child’s education, as well as the impact of the parent’s attitude toward the child being bilingual.

Murphy (2003) contends that a parent’s values and beliefs have a direct bearing on the child’s level of academic success he/she experiences. This would indicate that if the parent or in this case, the primary caregiver felt that education was important, he/she would ensure that his/her child would have access to educational related and extra curricular activities in the first and second language on a regular basis. Lambert and Taylor (in Lindholm-Leary, 2001) contend that most parents favor multiculturalism and maintaining one’s first language and culture over assimilation. This premise would also indicate that if maintenance of the first language is viewed as important as maintaining the second language by the caregivers, the caregivers would again ensure that the

children had different opportunities to participate in educational related and other formal activities to maintain the first language (English).

One of the most important activities that is directly related to academics is reading. Scholars have noted that reading directly impacts academic achievement of children, whether at the elementary or intermediate level (Kush, Watkins, & Brookhart, 2005; Sullivan Palincsar & Duke, 2004). It appears that all of the primary caregivers are aware of the importance of reading in the academic livelihood of their children, as all have stated that they made sure that their children read on a nightly basis. All read in Spanish and English, and one of the primary caregivers (CG1) detailed working with her child in phonics. All read to either to a sibling, or to the primary caregiver. CG3/CB3 relates how her children read on a timetable nightly due to the reading program that the children participate in. CG3/CB3 relates below:

Researcher: “And what, what kinds of activities do you do because they’re English speakers? And so they have to maintain their English also. So what kinds of activities do you do, just in the normal...”

CG3/CB3: “Oh, you know...”

Researcher: “Realm of things?”

CG3/CB3: “They do some. Ya’ll do those readings, those twenty-minute readings. Because they have to do like twenty-minute readings. They do them all the time.”

Researcher: “Uh huh.”

CG3/CB3: “They do them. They used to do it where they would read to me out loud, but they had been doing that because the schedule and stuff like that.”

Researcher: “But for English and for Spanish they would do like the twenty-minute readings. I would tell them to get a book and sometimes it would be ‘Oooh, I don’t want to get a book’ but my son get a book sometimes and my daughter would say, ‘I did mine already. I did mine at the YMCA.’”

Along with reading, there were other activities that were noted by the primary caregivers as activities that the children routinely participated in. In her study of African American elementary school aged children who were academically successful, Murphy (2003) noted that the parents of these children consistently made sure that their children participated in extra curricular activities so that they were well rounded. Scholars Seyfried and Chung (2002) document that parents of African American children who are successful academically encourage their children to participate in different activities, both academic and social. This is the same thing that the primary caregivers in this study have done. Other activities that were directly related to academics that the primary caregivers listed were: the attendance of tutorials, attendance at science camp (CB1), writing stories, and computer activities. Activities not directly related to academics that the primary caregivers noted ranged from playing board games (CB1), swimming (CG1), drill team and the Valentine’s Day parade (CG4), student council (CG4), baseball and football and Boy’s and Girl’s Club (CG1), writing to a pen pal (CB1), and taking family trips to Sea World San Antonio and the Philippines (CB1).

Church attendance and participation in church activities was noted by all of the caregivers as an activity that the children participated in on a regular basis. CG1 notes the following regarding her three daughters' participation in church related activities:

CG1: "On the weekends, they go to church from twelve to three..."

Researcher: "Um hmm..."

CG1: "Um, one to four is tutoring..."

Researcher: "Um, hmm..."

CG1: "But I teach reading over there. Both of them are involved. They do either um, Reading and English or math and English..."

Researcher: "So your church, your church is very active in..."

CG1: "Yes, we have a resource center."

Researcher: "OK."

CG1 continues by noting the following:

Researcher: "What, what are the extra curricular activities that they do?"

CG1: "They were, they, the middle school that I teach at has a dance team."

Researcher: "Um, hmm..."

CG1: "They were the mascots for the dance team. They praise dance at church which is dancing and interpretive sign language."

Researcher: "Um, hmm..."

CG1: "And um, for the people who are hearing impaired. They dance there."

Researcher: "And so in other words, both of your girls are trilingual."

CG1: "Yes. Well, one is bilingual, and the other two are trilingual."

Researcher: “Because they know sign language.”

CG1: “Oh, yes.”

CG4 explains the extra curricular experience that her granddaughter has in regards to church-the Honor Choir. She explains below:

Researcher: “So what are the things that she does outside of school that she does in English to keep up English?”

CG4: “Um, she, she does um, a lot of things like communicating in different activities.”

Researcher: “Um, hmm...”

CG4: “When we go places, we have plays and different things like that. Like she sings over at the Methodist Church you know in Honor Choir, you know, they communicate and do activities together.”

Researcher: “Uh, huh...”

CG4: “You know, it’s a mixture, you know...”

Researcher: “Uh, huh...”

CG4: “So she gets a chance to be with different ones...”

Researcher: “OK. OK.”

CG4: “Cause I think it’s only right so she you know, she can get an opportunity to really meet individual persons.”

Researcher: “Um, hmm. OK. Now what, what is this Honor Choir?”

CG4: “It’s um, it’s basically like a church organization...”

Researcher: “Um, hmm.”

CG4: “Um, hmm, and they go out and do um, yes, it is and they go out to different churches and do concerts and things like that.”

Researcher: “OK. OK.”

CG4: This last one that they had was at what, the Christian Church.”

Researcher: “Oh.”

CG4: “At that little school, which was real, real good, you know, it was real, real, good and then they took them out to the rain forest for a little picnic afterwards, so it’s, it’s, it’s like schooling, but then it’s a Christianity thing...”

Researcher: “Um hmm, um hmmm.”

CG4: “ You know, so it’s, it’s good both ways.”

Researcher: “Um, hmm. OK. Now, we’ve talked about what she does to maintain her Spanish, and we’ve talked about what she does to maintain her English and the different choirs. It’s good that you keep her in them.”

CG4: “She wore me out with the practicing.”

Primary Caregiver Question Ten. Homework can be a difficult task for any child. What are the procedures that you use to help your child complete his/her homework?

Again, scholars have documented the importance of parental attitude toward the child’s education and the importance of parental values and beliefs towards education (Murphy, 2003). This would indicate that if the parents feel that education is important, they would most likely feel that homework has a direct correlation to schoolwork and is an important component to the academic success of the child. Indeed, the scholars have documented that students feel that it is important that their parents provide assistance

with schoolwork and homework, and that parents should praise and encourage them (Halle, Kurtz-Costes, & Mahoney, 1997; Tucker et al., 2000).

In their responses to question ten, all of the primary caregivers indicated that they attempt to help their children with their homework that is in Spanish in some manner. All indicated at some point they ask their children to read the directions and they try to listen for familiar words and try to decipher and explain from that point, or they read the directions and try to interpret key words. If all else fails, they usually ask the children to either call a Spanish-speaking classmate for assistance, or a parent of one of the Spanish-speaking children in the program, or a teacher or neighbor who understands Spanish (CG3/CB3). Older or younger siblings who understand Spanish (CG1 has an older daughter who takes high school Spanish classes and a younger daughter who is also in the two-way immersion program; CG2 has an older son who participated in the program as well as a grandchild and a niece in the program; CG4 has another granddaughter who takes high school Spanish classes) are also utilized as homework helpers. CG4 tells her experience as a homework helper in the following passage:

Researcher: “Um, when she does her homework, in particular, the homework in Spanish, how does she go about doing that, how do you help her?”

CG4: “I help her with that.”

Researcher: “Um, hmm...”

CG4: “OK, now, I’ll tell her she’ll try to, um, read it to me in Spanish and I can pick up a little bit here and there of what she’s saying.”

Researcher: “Um, hmm.”

CG4: “Detail of it and I’ll tell her, honey, I don’t understand, I’ll say you know, if you can read it in English, read it in English.”

Researcher: “Um, hmm.”

CG4: “Then I can help you like that.”

Researcher: “Um, hmm.”

CG4: But I can’t help you in Spanish, and I say if you don’t understand all of it in Spanish, ask you teacher to go over it with you.”

Researcher: “Um, hmm.”

CG4: And let him help you with it and give you understanding of what’s what and then I can do better in helping you in English.”

Researcher: “Um, hmm.”

CG4: Because she use to go through some, some phases, because she didn’t know, you know...”

Researcher: “Uh, huh...”

CG4: “I don’t understand this, I don’t know this, I say, ‘Why your teacher don’t take the time to explain in more thoroughly?’”

CB1 discusses her role in the area of homework in the following:

Researcher: “Homework should be difficult for any child, so what are the procedures that you follow to help him to complete his homework?”

CB1: “Well, uh, he goes to the YMCA after school, so they do an hour for homework time...”

Researcher: “Mm hmm.”

CB1: “They, um, they usually have, try to have a bilingual person in there, in case they, the kids there need assistance with it.”

Researcher: “Um, hmm.”

CB1: “Um, if he doesn’t finish his homework within the hour, um, he has to do it at home. So then, we’ll get home and you know, he’ll sit down and do the homework. Um, if he needs any help, I’ll tell him to go ahead and do the stuff that he knows how to do...”

Researcher: “Um, hmm...”

CB1: “And then, we’ll go back and we’ll re-read and what he doesn’t, what he doesn’t understand, if I don’t understand it, call Dad. If Dad doesn’t understand it, we’re calling somebody else.”

Researcher: “Yes.”

CB1: “Uh, and then pretty much kind of give him, once we can give him the generic instructions on what he has to do...”

Researcher: “Uh, huh, yes...”

CB1: “He pretty much knows how to do it because they did it in class.”

Researcher: “Uh, huh...”

CB1: “It’s just sometimes hard to understand the directions in Spanish.”

Researcher: “Yes.”

CB1: “And if we can give him an example...”

Researcher: “Um, hmm.”

CB1: “Of like what he is doing, then he can do it. And, uh, then I’ll check his homework and make him correct any wrong mistakes, he doesn’t like to do.”

CB1 and CG4 have similar experiences except for location-the granddaughter of CG4 completes her homework at home and the son of CB1 begins his homework at the YMCA and finishes it at home.

Location, or where the child is when the homework is completed does not appear to be an important factor, that is, it does not seem to be important that the children complete the homework at home (the children of CG1, CB1, and CG3/CB3 complete their homework at school, at the YMCA, and at the Girl’s and Boy’s Club). What appears to be a common factor is that all of the children have homework assistance of some type (primary caregiver, sibling, friend, parent of a friend, teacher, or neighbor), and if the primary caregiver is not the principal helper, at some point during the completion process, the primary caregiver does intercede to ensure that the homework is completed correctly. CG1 recounts this her detailing the process of her child’s homework routine in the following passage:

Researcher: “Um, OK, lets talk about homework and homework can be a difficult task for any child. So what are the procedures that you use for your daughter to help her complete her homework?”

CG1: “Um, when she’s dropped off, she’s in the, she rides the bus, she’s a bus rider;

Researcher: “Um, hmm...”

CG1: “The school bus drops her off...”

Researcher: “Um, hmm...”

CG1: “At my school...”

Researcher: “Um, hmm...”

CG1: “She comes to my class.”

Researcher: “OK.”

CG1: “I didn’t, when she first started in the TWI program, I did not understand anything...”

Researcher: “OK.”

CG1: “Anything of the homework, um, because I didn’t speak Spanish...”

Researcher: “Um, hmm.”

CG1: “I didn’t read it...”

Researcher: “OK.”

CG1: “I would have, um, her teachers send the homework to me in English, sometimes, but when she didn’t, I had to ask someone...”

Researcher: “Um, hmm...”

CG1: “So homework was actually a learning experience for both of us, not only was I helping, but um, I was learning some words in Spanish as well.”

Researcher: “Yes.”

CG1: “So, um for a time, we would get the homework sent home in English because I really wanted to help her with her homework...”

Researcher: “Um, hmm...”

CG1: “But then we took the opportunity to make this a learning experience...”

Researcher: “Um, hmm...”

CG1: “So, we took it in English and in Spanish and we tried to convert it to those, um, what I had to do was I had to get a Spanish English dictionary.”

Researcher: “Um, hmm, um, hmmm...”

CG1: “And I had to get, um, someone that I knew that would, um, be a regular contact person.”

Researcher: “Um, hmm.”

CG1: “That would, she could read the sentence to them, and they would tell me what she had to do, and I could tell her how to do it in English, sometimes the stuff we did and I told her how to do it in English, that wasn’t what they were asking in Spanish.”

Researcher: “Oh.”

CG1: “It was a conflict, but we usually had a person that was available.

Researcher: “A parent or another student?”

CG1: “It would be um um, another, um, parent whose daughter was also in the TWI program...”

Researcher: “Um, hmm...”

CG1: “But it was in a different, higher grade level.”

Researcher: “OK...”

CG1: “So they already knew...”

Researcher: “OK...”

CG1: “Um, they already knew, I had this homework, the little girls was in the program the year before...”

Researcher: “OK...”

CG1: “So, it was still fresh in her mind, fresh, they still knew what they were talking about...”

Researcher: “Um, hmm...”

CG1: “They knew what were talking about, so I had to have some assistance in homework, but as the year went by, and I started learning a couple of words here and there...”

Researcher: “Um, hmm...”

CG1: “I kind of could, you could almost guess, the teachers were very fair, um, to put pictures on everything.”

Researcher: “Um, hmm.”

CG1: “And they would say escoje or circular and then you’ll know...”

Researcher: “Um, hmm.”

CG1: “And you could generally guess by the structure of the paper what she had to do.”

Researcher: “OK.”

CG1: “So it worked out pretty well, you know, only by the grace of God I’m telling you, because some things, that stuff fell into place for her...”

Researcher: “Um, hmm...”

CG1: “And because she got, had become accustomed to reading and writing Spanish, she started explaining her homework to me herself.”

Researcher: “Um, hmm...”

CG1: “Over some time, but in the beginning, we were really caught up, but they managed to make the homework.”

Researcher: “And so, and so, now, she’s, how does she do the Spanish homework?”

CG1: “Oh, yeah, she can read it and do her own homework.”

Researcher: “OK.”

CG1: And when she brings it to me to check, um, the teacher has written it in Spanish and in parenthesis it’s written in English.”

Researcher: “OK.”

CG1: “So I know what she has to do...”

Researcher: “OK...”

CG1: “So, I can check it...”

Researcher: “OK...”

CG1: “I can check it.”

Analysis of the Data of the Children’s Interviews

The children’s interviews were conducted at the same time that the interviews were conducted of the primary caregivers. The interviews of the children were transcribed and analyzed after those of the primary caregivers.

All of the children in the interview attend the same elementary school and have participated in the two-way language immersion program since kindergarten. Four girls and two boys participated in the interviews. The four girls were in the fourth grade, one boy was in fourth grade and one boy was in fifth grade.

Girl One (G1) is the child of CG1. She has an older sister who is proficient in Spanish and a younger sister who is also currently participating in the two-way language immersion program.

Girl Two (G2) is the child of CG2. Her mother is Mexican-American, but she is identified as African American for purposes of program participation. She identifies with African Americans more than Mexican Americans. She has an older brother, nieces, and cousins who are also of African American and Mexican American heritage and who have either completed participation in the two-way language immersion program (her older brother is in seventh grade), or they are currently participating in the two-way language immersion program (her nieces and her cousins).

Girl Three (G3) is the child of CG3/CB3. She has an older brother who is currently participating in the two-way language program. She is African American, but her father is of African heritage from Barbados. It is her mother's wish that she is able to communicate in Spanish with the paternal side of her family.

Girl Four (G4) is the grandchild of CG4. She too has an older sister who is proficient in Spanish. She is the only child in her family who has participated/is participating in the two-way immersion language immersion program.

Boy One (B1) is the child of CB1. His mother is African American and his father is Filipino American. He identifies with both heritages, but is classified as African American for the purposes of program participation. His father speaks Tagalog, and his parents would like him to be fluent in English, Tagalog, and Spanish.

Boy Three (B3) is the child of CG3/CB3. He is the fifth grader in the group. He is the older brother of G3. He has also participated in the two-way language immersion program since kindergarten.

Student Question One. Tell me about the things that you like about school.

Scholars document that how a students feels about school and learning is an important factor in determining academic success. Children who like school and have positive experiences in school such as winning contests, participating in sports, taking class trips, and positive interactions with teachers tend to be successful academically (Tucker et al., 2000; Hwang et al., 2002).

Four out of the six students (G1, G2, G3, and B3) referred to the academic subjects that they liked in school. G1 and G2 specifically noted math, science and social studies. As G1 states:

Researcher: “All right. Tell me about the things that you like about school.”

G1: “The things I like about school is when I go to gym, and when I, um, do uh, math and when I go to art.”

Researcher: “So, those are your favorite subjects?”

G1: “Yes, ma’am.”

Researcher: “What do you like about math?”

G1: “Um, I like about math is when we do times tables ‘cause we get on the board and we race to see who can do the times tables the fastest, and I always win.”

Researcher: “Ooh. And you like math more than you like reading?”

G1: “Yes, ma’am.”

Researcher: “Why?”

G1: “Because, um, because sometimes reading gets confusing and math I just know, know it by heart, and I can do it faster, faster than doing reading.”

G2 also indicated a preference for math over reading and writing. She explains in the following passage:

Researcher: “OK. Tell me about some of the things that you like about school.”

G2: “Um, that my teachers make fun ways for me to learn, and that I learn a lot of new things.”

Researcher: “OK, anything else?”

G2: “No.”

Researcher: “Favorite subject?”

G2: “Uh, math, science, and social studies.”

Researcher: “Mmm. Why do you like math, science, and social studies and you didn’t choose reading?”

G2: “Because, (laughing) because the teacher who teach those three subjects is, she make fun ways for ‘em. And I get ‘em, I learn ‘em better than, uh, reading and writing.

Students G2, B1, and B3 made reference to the learning process, enjoyment of learning new concepts and relaying learned concepts to different family members.

G4 was the only student that had a preference for more the more non-academic side of school. She preferred the other activities that occur in school. Only when pressed did she concede that she did like reading and science. G4 recounts in detail in the following passage:

Researcher: “OK. Tell me some of the things that you like about school.”

G4: “Uh, I like going to PTO meetings.”

Researcher: “OK.”

G4: “And I like going to arts and crafts.”

Researcher: “OK.”

G4: “Mmm, I like going to recess.”

Researcher: “OK. Ok why do you like going to PTO meetings?”

G4: “Because they give out free dress passes.”

Researcher: “OK. OK. And you doing, you like doing art, you said? Why?”

G4: “Because uh, last year, I was in ceramics and we got to make pots and stuff.”

Researcher: “OK, and you like going to recess?”

G4: “Yeah.”

Researcher: “Tell me why.”

G4: “Because I get to see all my friends and I get to play.”

Researcher: “OK. What are your favorite subjects?”

G4: “Mm, science, mmm, reading.”

Researcher: “OK, why do you like science?”

G4: “Because we get to do different kinds of experiments.”

Researcher: “And why do you like reading?”

G4: “Because we get to read a lot.”

Researcher: “You like to read?”

G4: “A little.”

Student Question Two. Tell me about the things that you like about being in your class.

Again, how the student feels about school and learning has an impact on student academic success (Tucker et al., 2000; Hwang et al., 2002). Edwards (1976) contends that students who are successful academically note that they have had positive experiences in elementary school, and have many positive interactions with teachers that set the stage of motivation for academic success. G1, G2, G3, and G4 noted the positive influence or positive interaction of a teacher being a motivating factor for being happy and successful in the particular class setting. G3 notes the following:

Researcher: “OK. Tell me some of the things you like about being in fourth grade.”

G3: “Mmmm, I like when the teachers teach me.”

Researcher: “OK.”

G3: “They give me good compliments.”

Researcher: “Which teachers give you good compliments?”

G3: “Ms. A and Ms. B.”

Researcher: “OK.”

G1 gives a similar response in the following passage:

Researcher: “OK. Tell me now about the things you like about being in your class.”

G1: “The things I like about being in my class is getting on the computer, helping the teacher, and helping... um, kids who need help with their work.”

Researcher: “So, you’re a teacher’s helper?”

G1: “Yes, ma’am.”

Researcher: “And what, when she asks you to help her, what kinds of things does she ask you to do?”

G1: “She, um, she likes to tell me to take the things down for the last day of school comes. And, um, get on the computer and look for a website for her.”

In this study, all of the students referred to peers in the classroom setting as another reason that they liked being in this kind of class setting. Edwards (1976) also contends that successful children have the tendency to associate themselves with positive peers and they steer clear of children who could be negative influences. This helps to create positive experiences that the students have. G2 recounts her experience in the following passage:

Researcher: “OK, tell me about the things that you like about being in your class.”

G2: “Uh, that I have a lot of friends, we, we all like to play around with each other, and really everybody is friends, no one’s mean to each other. And our, my teachers are great.”

When pressed for an answer, G4 recounts a similar response:

Researcher: “Mmm, hmm, what do you like? What, why do you like it? Why do you like being in that class? What do you like about being in that class?”

G4: “Because my teacher is nice. When I need help they help me.”

Researcher: “OK. Anything else?”

G4: “No.”

Researcher: “Do you have friends in that class?”

G4: “Uh, yeah, and I have lots of friends.”

B1 is more vocal, but he also has a similar response:

Researcher: “OK, now I want you to tell me about the things you like about being in your class.”

B1: “I like to be in my class because I really like the people that are in my class. They help me, I help them back. They’re nice to me. I am nice to them. Then when some of them are split up into other classes, we still do the same thing.”

Student Question Three. You are in a class where children speak languages other than your first language, English. Tell me about some of the things that make you like being in this kind of class.

It has been noted previously that in learning environments where both languages are perceived to have equal importance, the child often has a more positive attitude regarding being bilingual and learning a second language (Hayashi, 1998). In a study of transitional bilingual and two-way language immersion students, Hayashi (1998) found

that the students in the two-way language immersion program valued learning two languages and saw the necessity of learning and knowing two languages.

All of the students in this study made a reference to speaking two languages being beneficial, whether in completing classroom work, or assisting others, or in regards to future job potential. For instance, G1 recounts her experience in helping a fellow student in the following passage:

Researcher: “Now, you’re in a class where children speak languages other than your first language. Your first language is English. So, you are in a class with children, who speak something else. Right?”

G1: “Yes.”

Researcher: “They speak Spanish, right?”

G1: “Yes.”

Researcher: “OK. Tell me about some of the things that make you like being in this class.”

G1: “The things that make me, uh, like feel good in the class is, uh, when, when I like get to be doing stuff on my own, and like when we like get to do, uh, free day, we get to write and do any problems that we want to do.”

Researcher: “OK, so on free day, are you writing and doing all those problems, you’re doing this stuff in English or doing in Spanish?”

G1: “Well, we have a student from Cuba, so we mainly do Spanish and sometimes do English.”

Researcher: “OK. OK. So you help that student a lot?”

G1: “Yes, ma’am.”

Researcher: “OK. Or is it a her?”

G1: “It’s a him.”

Researcher: “It’s a him.”

G1: “Because sometimes, it’s hard to help him when he is like confused.”

Researcher: “Uh, huh.”

G1: “Some words he forgot to say in Spanish and they grade hard.”

Researcher: “Um, hmm.”

G1: “So you have to like remember.”

Researcher: “But you remember pretty well?”

G1: “Yes, ma’am.”

G2 gives her account of being able to get a good job in the following:

Researcher: “Now you’re in a class where the children speak languages other than your first language. Your first language is English.”

G2: “Mm, hmm...”

Researcher: “OK. So, tell me about some of the things that make you like being in this specific kind of class.”

G2: “Umm, that well, um, that I know, I know two languages and then when you know two language, when you get older and you want to get a job, it will give you a better job.”

B3 also has a positive account as he tells the following:

Researcher: “OK. Well tell me what you like about being in this kind of class.

OK now, in the rest of the school the other children are in a class where they only speak English, right?”

B3: “Mm, hmm.”

Researcher: “OK, so what do you like about being in a class where you speak English and Spanish?”

B3: “I feel comfortable.”

Researcher: “Why?”

B3: “Because, like I can speak two languages. Like if I had to help somebody, like if they only know a little bit of English...”

Researcher: “Mm, hmm...”

B3: “I could, I could help them.”

B3’s comment refers back to the breaking down of “two solitudes that coexist without ever interacting” (Genesee, 1987). By understanding the need of communicating with someone outside of his first language, B3 appears to have the desire to break through the solitude.

Student Question Four. You obviously have a neat teacher who does a lot of cool things in class to help you learn. Tell about the different things that your teacher does to make you feel comfortable in class so that you can learn.

Again, it is documented by scholars that students who have many different positive experiences in school achieve academically (Edwards, 1976; Tucker et al., 2000; Hwang et al., 2002). This would include positive experiences again with the

teacher, in the classroom, related to learning. The assumption could be made that if the child feels that he or she gets a lot of positive support in the classroom, the child has the opportunity to be academically successful. Four out of the six students (G2, G3, G4, and B3) reported that the teacher would provide support when new ideas and concepts were introduced and were difficult to understand initially. Five out of the six students (G1, G4, G3, B1, and B3) took comfort in the fact that when new concepts were introduced and difficult to understand, the teacher would provide a different activity such as a game, a book activity, or a writing activity that would assist in providing explanation of the concept. G4 recounts her experiences in the following passage:

Researcher: “Tell me some of the things that you like, that, uh, Ms. M. does that she, that she does to make you feel comfortable and that helps you in class?”

G4: “Like if we don’t, like if we don’t understand reading problems or something, she gives it to us in an activity or something.”

Researcher: “What do you mean by activity?”

G4: “Like she put us in groups and we can get different kinds of books and stuff and read ‘em. Then she gives us questions and we work together, answer the questions together.”

Researcher: “OK. OK, now who did you have that taught you in Spanish last year?”

G4: “Mr. S. and Ms. M.”

Researcher: “Did you like some of the things that they did to help you?”

G4: “Yes.”

Researcher: “OK. Tell me some of the things that you like, that they did that helped you learn, that made you feel comfortable and helped you.”

G4: “Ms. M. she helped me, which was my math teacher, she helped me like, when she, she called all of us separately outside and asked us what it was we needed help on and she helped us.”

Researcher: “OK. And how did she help you, she, she spoke Spanish the whole time, huh?”

G4: “Sometimes she spoke English.”

Researcher: “How did she help you?”

G4: “Like, when I needed help in my division, she pulled me out of the class personally and asked me what did I need help on and then she started helping me.”

Researcher: “OK. So like if you, if you needed help on division and you showed it to, you showed her what you needed help on, on paper, she’s show you something else on paper?”

G4: “Yeah, and example or something.”

B1 recounts a similar response:

Researcher: “So all of your teachers are real neat. So tell me the different things that they have done to help you learn in Spanish.”

B1: “Well, Ms.G., she would, um, we would have like these little books that we would read in class, in Spanish...”

Researcher: “Mm, hmm...”

B1: “She would tell us to read it and then after school...”

Researcher: “Mm, hmm.”

B1: “She’d take, tell us, she’d give us another book to read it...”

Researcher: “Mm, hmm...”

B1: “For our homework, the whole.”

Researcher: “Mm, hmm...”

B1: “And the parents have to sign it with your name. In the first grade, Ms. M. she, um, would put letters on the board and, like, I remember one time she told us, like, to make words out of, out of the vocabulary.”

Researcher: “Uh, huh.”

B1: “Ms. R. she told us to write a story.”

Researcher: “Mm, hmm.”

B1: “In Spanish.”

Researcher: “Mm, hmm.”

B1: “She’ll put, like this picture and we’ll have to write a whole story of it. Then in third grade, Ms. D. will tell us to, like, read a book and she would give this paper with questions and we would check it.”

Researcher: “Mm, hmm.”

B1: “And then in fourth grade now, Mr. S. sometimes he will tell us to write stories, sometimes he’ll tell us to go on the computers to do stuff in Spanish or English.”

Researcher: “Mm, hmm.”

B1: “But most of the time, it’s, uh, writing stuff.”

Student Question Five. I know that you have a lot of friends. Between all of you, you all speak different language. Tell me about the languages that you speak with certain friends and why. And Student Question Six. Some of your friends only speak English. Tell me whether or not you have tried to teach some of them your other language, and tell me who you have tried to teach your other language, and why you have tried to teach them.

It has been documented that children develop a sensitivity to language early and will often chose the language in which they communicate depending on the person with whom they are communicating (Lyon, 1996). If they know that the person with whom they are communicating is fluent in their first language, they will communicate with them in their first language and visa versa. Attitude, however, does play an important role in language use. If the child feels that communicating in the second language is as important as communicating in the first language, they possibly will attempt to speak the second language more, and possibly attempt to teach it to family and friends (Hayashi, 1998).

In question five, all of the children with the exception of G3 indicated that the language that they spoke with friends was dependent upon the friend’s ability to understand the language. In other words, the conversation is situational based upon whom the child is speaking with.

In the following discourse, G1’s responses indicate that she speaks Spanish if she knows that the person speaks Spanish well. Her answers indicate that she has

attempted to teach two friends Spanish, although the motivation for the friends wanting to learn Spanish is not clear.

Researcher: “OK. OK. Now, I know you have got a lot of friends, don’t you?”

G1: “Yes, ma’am.”

Researcher: “Mmm, how many friends do you have?”

G1: “Probably about like ten or six.”

Researcher: “OK. Now, between all of you, you all speak different languages, don’t you?”

G1: “Yes, ma’am.”

Researcher: “Well, tell me which languages you speak with whom and tell me why.”

G1: “I speak, I speak English with my English friends cause they don’t understand Spanish. And I speak, I speak Spanish with my friends that um, that’s like, Hispanic because sometimes they don’t understand English. And they, um, really say it can you really please like, talk in Spanish because I can’t um, understand English. They tell me in Spanish.”

Researcher: “Oh, OK. So you practice, you try to practice English with your Spanish speaking friends but sometimes when they really don’t understand it...”

G1: “I talk Spanish.”

Researcher: “Oh, OK. And that helps them?”

G1: “Yes ma’am.”

Researcher: “OK. Now, your English friends, they speak only English, right?”

G1: “Yes, ma’am.”

Researcher: “Well, you’ve got some English friends who actually speak Spanish, don’t you?”

G1: “Yes, ma’am.”

Researcher: “OK, well, let’s talk about your English friends who only speak English.”

G1: “Um, my friend, uh, L. and my friend, M...”

Researcher: “Uh, huh.”

G1: “She talk English and sometimes Spanish.”

Researcher: “Mm, hmm.”

G1: “And this girl named L...”

Researcher: “Uh, huh.”

G1: “All we talk is English.”

Researcher: “Uh, huh. OK, have you ever tried to teach your, say for instance, L. only talks English, have you ever tried to teach her Spanish?”

G1: “Yeah, ‘cause we were on the phone and she was like, how do you talk, um, Spanish and I was teaching her.”

Researcher: “And so why do you think she wants to learn Spanish?”

G1: “So she can, uh, ‘cause if she go to a different country, she’ll know how to talk it. Or to Mexico.”

Researcher: “OK, but now you have, do you think you have more friends because you speak Spanish and English?”

G1: “Umm, sort of.”

Researcher: “OK, so do think she wants to have more friends too?”

G1: “I don’t have a clue about that one.”

Researcher: “ You don’t have a clue about that one, huh? OK. OK, so with L. you’ve tried to help her learn Spanish. Have you tried to teach anybody else, any of your other friends Spanish?”

G1: “No, because they’re not interested about it.”

G2 has responses to questions five and six that are similar to G1’s responses in that they indicate that her language use is dependent upon the person with whom she is conversing:

Researcher: “Now you said yourself you have a lot of fiends.”

G2: “Mmm, hmmm.”

Researcher: “Oh, good. So between all of you, you all speak different languages. So, tell me about your friends. Tell me about the languages that you speak with your different friends. Who you speak what to whom. And why you speak this to this person and who you speak this or that to that person.”

G2: “Uh, I got a best friend that she came to the school this year.”

Researcher: “Uh, huh.”

G2: “And we’re best friends and when I go to her house I have to talk Spanish because her parents...”

Researcher: “Mmm, hmm...”

G2: “They only talk Spanish. They talk a little English, but they don’t understand it, so I talk Spanish. And sometimes me and her talk Spanish and we talk English. “Cause she’s not, she’s not, really she doesn’t like to talk in Spanish, but she know more Spanish than English.”

Researcher: “OK.”

G2: “So we talk in both languages.”

Researcher: “OK.”

G2: “And...but the rest of my friends, I talk English.”

Researcher: “OK.”

G2: “Really don’t talk Spanish, but with her.”

Researcher: “And so what about your friends who are English speaking? OK because you mentioned A. and you mentioned M. Do you ever speak Spanish to them?”

G2: “No.”

Researcher: “Why not?”

G2: “Uh, because we talk more English.”

Researcher: “OK, so because your first language is English, you speak English with them?”

G2: “Mmm, hmmm.”

Researcher: “And with this new friend you speak Spanish with her? OK. OK. Now you have mentioned A. and M. they speak both languages. You new friend speaks more Spanish than English...”

G2: “Uh, huh.”

Researcher: “Do you have any friends that speak nothing but English?”

G2: “Nope, because everybody in both classes that are my friends and they talk both languages.”

Researcher: “OK, now your brother and sisters?”

G2: “Only one of, only one of my brothers, who is, who is going to eighth grade next year.”

Researcher: “Uh, huh.”

G2: “He was in Spanish just like I am right now.”

Researcher: “Uh, huh, so he speaks Spanish, too?”

G2: “Mmm, hmm.”

Researcher: “OK. Um, cousins?”

G2: “No, I’ve only got two nieces, D. and C. They’re in Spanish classes going through right now. She’s going, well, my oldest one she’s going to sixth grade and she says she don’t want to be in Spanish next year but my mama told her she needs, she needs to get one of them classes in Spanish to keep knowing it. And she said no but my mama said that will give her a good job.”

Researcher: “OK. So you really don’t have any friends that are English speaking that you’ve tried to teach them Spanish?”

G2: “No.”

Researcher: “OK.”

G2: “Well, where I live I don’t have no friends, ‘cause it’s apartments.”

Researcher: “OK, OK, and none at school that are just totally English speaking?”

G2: “No.”

Researcher: “OK. But that would be because all, everybody in your class speaks English and Spanish.”

G2: “Yes. Most of them have been with me through all, through all the years.”

Researcher: “OK.”

G2: “Like, one friend she’s, she’s been with really, M. been with me and A., they’ve both been with me since I was, we were in kindergarten.”

Researcher: “Mmm, hmmm, mm hmm. I remember. OK.”

B1’s responses are similar to those of G1 and G2:

Researcher: “Now, I know you have a lot of friends. I saw some of your friends at the gym. OK, think about all of the friends you have. Not just here, just all of your friends. And between all of you, you speak a bunch of different languages. OK, so tell me about the language you speak with certain friends and why.”

B1: “I speak with, like, some of my friends at L. A. Morgan named J., L, um Jo. And a lot of other kids in Spanish.”

Researcher: “Mmm, hmm.”

B1: “But...”

Researcher: “And why do you speak to them in Spanish?”

B1: “It’s because some, sometimes I feel like speaking Spanish with them, they won’t um get confused when I’m talking in English.”

Researcher: “OK.”

B1: “And then my other friends in here I speak, I speak to them English, ‘cause they don’t know Spanish at all.”

Researcher: “OK. OK. So let’s think about your friends who speak English.”

B1: “Um, I like to speak to them, they’re like real good friends to me. “Cause, like, I still, like, I feel like my friends over there, they play basketball with me...”

Researcher: “Mmm, hmm...”

B1: “We’ve known each other since six years.”

Researcher: “OK.”

B1: “When we was little.”

Researcher: “Mmm, hmm. So do they know that you speak Spanish?”

B1: “Uh, some of them.”

Researcher: “OK, have you ever tried to teach them Spanish?”

B1: “Uh, no.”

Researcher: “Mmm, hmm. Why didn’t you try...your other friends didn’t want to learn Spanish?”

B1: “Uh, huh.”

Researcher: “They never asked you?”

B1: “No, they never did.”

Researcher: “So if they were to ask you, would you try to teach them Spanish?”

B1: “Yeah, pretty much.”

All three of the preceding students’ responses seem to indicate that at some point

in time, the students do attempt to teach interested friends Spanish, or they indicated that they would teach them Spanish if asked. G1, G4, and B3 indicated that they had friends who requested that they speak or teach them Spanish.

Student Question Seven. When you are in a situation with one of your family members who does not speak Spanish and someone else who does not speak English, and they need to talk to each other, explain what you do.

And Student Question Eight. Explain how this makes you feel and why.

Again, research documentation supports the idea that when students are in an atmosphere where both languages are perceived to have equal importance, children tend to have a positive attitude towards learning a second language, and utilizing both languages in academic as well as social situations (Hayashi, 1998). Researcher Lyon (1996) also documents that bilinguals choose their language to accommodate the person with whom they are conversing, and if the person with whom they are conversing proves to be less fluent in their first language, then, they move to converse in the second language. This takes skill on the part of the student, and motivation from the parent, suggesting that if the parent has motivated the child to learn and converse in the second language, then the child will do this without any trepidation.

In question seven, all of the children indicated that they had served as a translator for either their primary caregivers or another individual who spoke Spanish. The children indicated that they were able to utilize their language skills in various settings, thus adjusting their language to their primary caregiver as well as the person who

understood no English. G1 was able to give an account of what occurs when she goes to Wal-Mart with her primary caregiver. As she recounts:

Researcher: “Have you ever gotten into a situation where... OK, what happens if your, like say, you and your mom are in the store OK, you are in a store, um like say...”

G1: “Wal-Mart?”

Researcher: “Wal-Mart. You’re exactly right. And everybody goes out to Wal-Mart, right? Everybody goes there. And so sometimes you’ve even seen people who don’t speak English.”

G1: “Um, like my mom tells me to listen because she doesn’t think, she thinks that people might be talking about her and she doesn’t like that thing.”

Researcher: “OK, and so you listen sometimes and what are they usually saying? Other stuff or...?”

G1: “They say like “let’s get this bread. Let’s go get some rice or corn and let’s get the rice without gravy.””

Researcher: “OK. If you, if you were out there and say your mother need something and maybe somebody is working at the store and they only speak Spanish.”

G1: “I’ll, like, ask them in Spanish where do you get, uh, where do you get the clothing from.”

Researcher: “Mm hmm, mm hmm.”

G1: “Like children’s clothing.”

Researcher: “And...”

G1: “But if they didn’t have a sign...”

Researcher: “And they tell you? And do they look excited when you start talking to them?”

G1: “Yes, because they’re like amazed that I can talk Spanish, because they never seen someone like my color talk Spanish.”

Researcher: “Mm hmmm, mm hmm. And what do you do when they get excited?”

G1: “I, like, grin and blush.”

G2 recounts a similar experience in the store:

Researcher: “Let’s pretend you are in a situation with one of your family members, like your mom.”

G2: “Uh huh...”

Researcher: “Your mom understands Spanish, but she can’t always express herself, right? OK. So you are in the store and somebody who only speaks Spanish comes and asks your mom something. And she assumes, let’s say this person assumes that she’ll answer him back, but she doesn’t. What do you do?”

G2: “Really, that happened to us one day.”

Researcher: “OK, tell me about it.”

G2: “We went to the store and this lady, she, I guess she thought my mama knew Spanish ’cause she was like, that color...”

Researcher: “Mm hmm...”

G2: “Or something. Well, she came up to her and asked her something in Spanish and, I don’t even remember what, or what it was and me and my brother talked to the lady and told her. And told her the answer to what she asked my mama.”

G4 recounts below that she has never had an experience of such in a store, but she has had a similar experience at a garage sale:

Researcher: “Have you ever gotten into a situation, uh, let’s just say for instance, you and your grandmother are in Wal-Mart...”

G4: “Mm hmm...”

Researcher: “And somebody needs help. And they start speaking to you, and they’re talking to anybody, they need help and they only speak Spanish. And they start talking to grandmother...”

G4: “And they only speak Spanish?”

Researcher: “Yes...”

G4: “And she can’t understand what they said?”

Researcher: “No...”

G4: “I translate it for her.”

Researcher: “Tell me what happened.”

G4: “Like...”

Researcher: “You’ve had that experience...”

G4: “No.”

Researcher: “Where you have had to translate...”

CG4: “Tell her about the garage sale...”

G4: “Oh, yeah...”

Researcher: “Tell me about it.”

G4: “This man came when we had a garage sale. He wanted to buy something and he was asking a price and Grandma couldn’t understand, my grandma couldn’t understand. So she asked me and I was talking to him in Spanish.”

Researcher: “OK.”

G4: “And I told him the price.”

Researcher: “OK.”

G4: “And then I told him how much the thing cost, first I asked my grandma how much it cost, and then I told him.”

Researcher: “OK.”

G4: “And then he bought it!”

B3 is able to recall a similar experience in a bank:

Researcher: “Now, your mom was telling me about a situation in the bank. Tell me about the situation in the bank.”

B3: “Like, the man couldn’t, he could only speak a little bit of English...”

Researcher: “Mm, hmm...”

B3: “ And he had, he needed something in the bank so my mama asked me if I could help him. And I said OK. So, I helped the man.”

Question eight again deals with how the child feels regarding being bilingual. All of the children recalled feeling either proud or happy that they were able to help

someone by speaking to them in Spanish. This suggests validation of the importance of being bilingual (Hayashi, 1998; Lindholm-Leary, 2001). When asked how he felt regarding his deed, B3 recalls:

Researcher: “Well, how, how did he, how did, how do you think he felt?”

B3: “Uh, kinda...”

Researcher: After you helped him?”

B3: “Happy...”

Researcher: “OK. How did it make you feel?”

B3: “Glad.”

Researcher: “OK. Why did it make you feel glad?”

B3: “Because, I felt good about myself, and I helped somebody in my community.”

G2 recounts similar sentiments:

Researcher: “OK, and how does that make you feel?”

G2: “Good, because I’m helping, because I am helping people.”

G1’s sentiments are also the same:

Researcher: “Mm hmm, mm hmm. And what do you do when they get excited?”

G1: “I, like, grin and blush.”

Researcher: Uh, huh, uh huh, and what do they say?”

G1: “They say, uh like, “que bonita linda (translated as how beautiful)”.”

Researcher: “And so how does that make you feel?”

G1: “Happy... and proud of myself.”

Researcher: “Proud because...”

G1: “Because um, people are amazed that, um, that I can talk Spanish.”

Student Question Nine. Tell about the kinds of things that you do outside of school, who you do them with, and why.

Research regarding this question suggests that students who have a positive outlook on school tend to do well in school (Tucker, et al., 2000; Hwang et al., 2002). The research also suggests that students who are successful academically have a range of activities that they participate in outside of school, whether they are actually organized group activity or unstructured activities with family and friends (Edwards, 1977; Murphy, 2003).

All of the students indicated that they were involved in an organized group activity either after school or when school was not in session during the summer months. After discussion regarding some unstructured activities, G2 tells in detail about the organized summer program that she participates in below:

Researcher: “You’re here at school for a specific program. Does your mom have you in any other types of programs?”

G2: “No, I just go to this place, uh, W. C. (recreational center).”

Researcher: “OK, and when is that, after school? Or...”

G2: “No, it’s just like when, like I used to go to it. I don’t go to it now. Now when this program wasn’t started yet.”

Researcher: “OK, during the summer.”

G2: “Mm hmm.”

Researcher: “And they had a summer program?”

G2: “Yeah, they had, it was three weeks long.”

Researcher: “OK.”

G2: “And we had, we signed these papers to do stuff and like they call you out by your name and you go to, uh, ya’ll switch different places, like I had karate, break-dancing, computers, uh, and swimming, arts and crafts. You can pick as many classes as you want to.”

Researcher: “Good. Did you like...”

G2: “Me and my niece chose the same classes.”

Researcher: “Your niece is...”

G2: “D.”

Researcher: “Yes, I think I remember her.”

G2: “E., both of them are in there.”

Researcher: “OK, I think I remember D. What is D.’s last name?”

G2: “F.”

Researcher: “OK I remember her. And so that was last summer?”

G2: “No, it was this summer.”

Researcher: “It’s this summer?”

G2: “Mm, hmm.”

Researcher: “OK, so you’re doing that this summer and you’re doing this program?” (G2 was interviewed at school during one of the summer programs.)

G2: “I am not doing the other one no more, I am just doing this one.”

Researcher: “But you finished that one?”

G2: “Mm hmm. When this one stops, and then when I, when this one is over, I’m going to another one at the high school. It’s going to be a science camp and a math camp. And I’m the only one who can go to the science one. Only me, and my aunt, me and my brother and my niece, because my brother doesn’t want to go. It’s for incoming fifth and eighth graders, and my brother doesn’t want to go. So, my mama said I could go. And then there is a math camp for incoming fifth, sixth, and seventh, and eighth graders. So she is going to go with me to the math one.”

Edwards (1997) contends that successful students do participate in religious activities such as church. Primary caregivers and their children did indicate either attending children’s church, or participating in a church activity, specifically organized for children. G4 discusses her participating in the Honor Choir and various other church affiliated activities. She recounts below:

Researcher: “Now tell me, um, tell me about this. Your grandmother and I have talked quite a bit but she hasn’t told me about the different things that you’re involved in. Tell me about some of the things that you do outside of school.”

G4: “I do Honor Choir...”

Researcher: “OK.”

G4: “I, I do uh, I go to church choir...”

Researcher: “OK.”

G4: “Church choir, and different activities in the church.”

Researcher: “OK. OK, like what?”

G4: “Like, when they have, what’s that called Grandmama, at the church?”

CG4: “Sometimes they have ushers.”

G4: “Yes, sometimes I have to usher,”

Researcher: “OK.”

G4: “And give the papers out to the people...”

Researcher: “OK, OK...”

CG4: “Sometimes, you help with the collection...”

G4: “Yeah, sometimes I help with the collection...”

Researcher: “OK.”

G4: “And I go to this program, and it’s like a program, like it matters how old you are, like if I’m ten...”

Researcher: “Uh hmm...”

G4: “I go to a teacher, like uh, church teacher...”

Researcher: “Uh hmm...”

G4: “And they teach us different kinds of stuff about the Bible.”

Three students (G1, G2, and G4) indicated that some of the activities that they do outside of school are done with family members, and three students (G1, G2, and G4) indicated that some of the activities that they do outside of school are usually done with family members. This underscores the important impact of parents, family, and friends in regards to academic achievement (Murphy, 2003). G1 discusses her familial activities below:

Researcher: “OK, so now tell me, you know, your mom and I have talked. And she, she is really smart. And she keeps you involved in a lot of things. Tell me about all of those different things that you do. You, your mom and your sisters...”

G1: “Well, my sister, I. is in band at the high school, and she is in the drill team, and my sister, Z., she wants to be in the drill team in my school, and I’m a cheerleader for, a mascot cheerleader for the middle school. And my mom, she works at my church and she works at the middle school.”

Researcher: “OK, now I want you to tell me about the things that you do outside of school. You do some things that are English and you do some things that are Spanish.”

G1: “Yes.”

Researcher: “Tell me about, tell me which ones are English, tell me the things you do that are English and tell me the things that you do that are in Spanish.”

G1: “The first English thing I do is like, um, spring break, I went to Schlitterbaun, and I go to uh, my aunt’s house. And, uh, I like going swimming and mainly playing basketball.”

Researcher: “Uh huh.”

G1: “and, uh, the Spanish things I do is sometimes my sister upstairs or if there is nothing on TV that we like to see, uh, we turn sometimes she wants to turn to the Spanish station.”

Researcher: “OK. OK, and so you watch TV in Spanish?”

G1: “Mm hmm.”

Researcher: “And what, do you try to translate for your older sister?”

G1: “No, because she doesn’t like to watch it.”

Researcher: “OK, so it is you and your little sister?”

G1: “Yeah.”

Researcher: “OK, but you don’t need to translate for her, do you?”

G1: “No, ‘cause she understands it, it’s just that she doesn’t speak it well.”

Researcher: “She’s getting there?”

G1: “Uh huh.”

B1 discusses the activities that he does after school with friends:

Researcher: “OK. OK, tell me the types of things you do when you are not in school.”

B1: “Um, like after school, my mom said I go to YMCA.”

Researcher: “Mm hmm.”

B1: “And I like, I like to do my homework and then I get to play.”

Researcher: “Mm hmm.”

B1: “ We will go to the gym or go outside and we’ll have to make jokes or play board games.”

Researcher: “Mm hmm.”

B1: “We talk.”

Researcher: “And so who do you, and when you play and play board games, with, who do you play with?”

B1: “Uh, I play with my best friends, like J., he’s been in kindergarten with me, in the same class all through fourth grade.”

Researcher: “Mm hmm.”

B1: “And that’s pretty much it.”

Themes Resulting from the Primary Caregiver Interview Data

As a result of the data collected from the interviews of all five primary caregivers regarding their children and their participation in a two-way language immersion program, the following themes emerged:

- None of the primary caregivers is bilingual, but they all place high importance on their children being bilingual,
- Educational levels for the primary caregivers range from high school educated to master’s degree level. The educational level does not appear to be a factor in regards to the importance of education; the commonality appears to be similar values and beliefs regarding education.
- All of the primary caregivers recount reasons for being bilingual from economic to educational to social/familial,
- Motivators for enrolling their children to being in the bilingual program range from the desire to be bilingual to economic reasons to educational to living alongside other ethnicities,
- In an effort to improve the quality of their children’s Spanish, all of the primary caregivers actively involve themselves in their children’s educations. The active involvement ranges from conversing with the teacher on a regular basis by e-mail

or in person, to participating in the PTO, to participating in conversational Spanish classes for the primary caregivers,

- The child centered activities that the primary caregivers do with their children to ensure that their children are successful in the second language range from participating in singing groups to participating in Spanish dance groups,
- The primary caregivers indicated that they would like to have the opportunity provided to them and their children to participate in more activities that would enhance Spanish language learning for their children such as summer programs in Spanish or more after school help in Spanish,
- All of the primary caregivers make sure that the children routinely participate in extra curricular activities such as reading, tutorials, dance, sports, and church activities in English,
- All of the primary caregivers ensure that their children are successful in completing homework, and this includes getting assistance from other adults and or students who are fluent in Spanish.

Themes Resulting from the Student Interview Data

In a reviewing the data collected from the interviews of the six African American children participating in the two-way language program, the following themes emerged:

- All of the children where able to discuss different positive experiences that they have had in school. They were able to discuss positive interactions with teachers, positive interactions with peers, and positive academic learning experiences,

- All of the students expressed positive motivators for learning another language. These motivators range from economic to being able to communicate with people to gaining more friends,
- All of the students appeared to switch languages based on the situation (friends who only spoke English versus friends who only spoke Spanish, providing translating assistance) with ease and pride,
- All of the students participated in organized extra curricular activities as well as informal activities with family and friends. These activities were done in either English or Spanish.

Summary

The purpose of this chapter was to review the procedure for the data collected, review the data collected from the interviews of six African American children participating in an elementary two-way immersion program and their primary caregivers, and to identify prevalent themes that emerged as a result of this research study.

After the presentation of the analyzed data, the researcher identified prevalent themes that emerged that correlated to the two questions posed at the onset of the study. The themes that emerged as a result of this study correlated to the theoretical framework of literature presented in relationship to the following topics: the impact of the parent's educational level on the child's education, the parent's personal attitude regarding school and how this impact the academic success of the child, the impact of the parent's attitude on the child's education, the impact of the parent's attitude toward the child being bilingual, the impact of student attitude on student academic success, the impact of the

child's attitude on bilingualism and the importance of being bilingual, and how the child feels regarding being bilingual.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

According to the literature, there are numerous studies that document Anglo English proficient children that participate in elementary two-way immersion and dual language programs and the different factors that facilitate academic success in two languages for this population of children (De Jong, 2002). There are also numerous studies that document Hispanic English language learners (ELL's) who participate in elementary two-way immersion and dual language programs, and the factors that facilitate academic success in either English only or English and Spanish for this population of language learners (Collier, 1992; Alanis, 2000; Kirk Senesac, 2002; Collier & Thomas, 2004). The studies that document African American children who participate in elementary two-way immersion programs place no emphasis in regards to how to help African American children achieve academic success in the elementary two-way language program setting, but instead place an emphasis on race and intelligence as factors in regards to academic success for this particular group of children (Nicoladis, Taylor, Lambert, & Cazabon, 1998). The absence of research regarding academic success in two-way language immersion programs for this unique group of children makes it difficult for teachers, parents, and school administrators to develop strategies and techniques to help this group of children succeed academically through the vehicle of learning a second language.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine perceptions of possible factors that lead to academic success for African American children who participate in two-way immersion language programs. The two research questions that guided this study were:

- 1.) What are the positive factors that parents and students perceive to be the reasons for academic success of African American children who participate in two-way immersion language programs?
- 2.) What do the parents and students perceive as challenges that had to be overcome in order for African American children who participate in elementary two-way immersion language programs to be successful?

Sample

Five African-American fourth grade students and one-fifth grade African-American student currently participating in a two-way immersion language program were interviewed for this study along with their primary caregivers. Five primary caregivers were interviewed as one caregiver had a child at fourth and at fifth grade participating in the two-way immersion language program.

All of the participants were given code names to protect their anonymity. All of the participants were cooperative, and they were excited to participate of the uniqueness of this study. Several participants were contacted by telephone for additional interviews to clarify responses that appeared to be unclear during the initial interviews.

Analysis of Data

The interview data were audio taped and transcribed. Any unclear responses by the participants were clarified through additional interviews by the researcher.

Results of the Study

The results of the data revealed that the primary caregivers perceived that their children's participation in a two-way language immersion program was a positive educational move that would enhance the lives of their children economically, educationally, and socially. These perceptions were motivators to enroll their children in the school's two-way language immersion program. Although the primary caregivers had varied educational backgrounds, they all perceived that education and in particular, being completely literate in a second language would be a valuable tool for their children at some point in their lives. They all made sure that their children participated in extra curricular activities in English. Although one primary caregiver did indicate that she did promote her child's participation in a Spanish extra curricular activity, three other primary caregivers did express a concern that not enough support was provided to their children to enhance their language learning such as summer programs in Spanish. All of the primary caregivers participated in activities to ensure that their children were successful in Spanish such as PTO, language classes, or dance. All of the primary caregivers indicated that they kept some form of regular contact with their children's teachers to ensure that the children were succeeding academically. All of the primary caregivers facilitated homework completion in Spanish by helping the children with what they could, and if they could not assist the child, they sought out assistance through

another Spanish speaking parent, a Spanish-speaking neighbor, or a Spanish-speaking classmate.

The students had similar perceptions regarding participating in a two-way language immersion classroom. All of them felt that it was important to learn another language, whether it was to gain more friends, or to get ahead educationally, or to help them become economically stable. The children had friends who spoke English and who spoke Spanish, and they often attempted to teach their English-speaking friends Spanish words and phrases. The children all had experiences in school that they perceived as positively impacting their education. These experiences ranged from interactions with their teachers who taught them in Spanish, their interactions with their classmates in the classroom, and their interactions with their classmates outside of the classroom (on the playground during recess, for example). They tended to have friends who were positive influences in regards to learning and education, meaning that their friends had the same goals and values regarding education that they did, and they had a positive view regarding learning Spanish. All enjoyed a variety of activities in school and outside of school, structured and unstructured. The different structured activities ranged from Spanish dance, to karate, to after school tutorials, to church related activities and choirs. The unstructured activities ranged from watching Spanish language television, playing outside, and family outings or trips. The children tended to do different activities with primary caregivers, siblings, other family members, and friends.

Conclusions

The interview data revealed that both primary caregivers and their children understood the advantages of being bilingual. Their perceptions indicated that their involvement and participation in seemingly routine activities such as PTO, parent teacher conferencing, and assistance with homework activities (whether the assistance was provided by the primary caregiver or someone else) was paramount to the academic success of the children. The primary caregivers also perceived that involvement in extra curricular activities in English and in Spanish, both structured and non structured, with family and or friends facilitated the academic success for their children in English and in Spanish.

The students perceived that the amount and the quality of teacher interaction was an important piece of their being successful academically in Spanish. They also felt that the assistance that they received with homework was an important piece of their academic success in English and in Spanish. These children have the encouragement of their parents, siblings, and other family and friends in regards to learning and speaking Spanish and they perceive that learning and speaking Spanish is a positive factor in their lives. Ogbu (2004) contends that many African American children purposely do poorly in school for fear of being labeled “acting white”. This perception does not bother this group of children because they obviously felt good about learning and speaking Spanish, and this was reflected in their responses in regards to when and whom they chose to speak Spanish with, how often, and the motives behind speaking Spanish with the specific persons. Their perceptions regarding learning Spanish and whether or not it was

important did have a positive impact on their learning in Spanish. In structured and unstructured activities, the children felt that they had the liberty to be able to speak Spanish, which facilitated more practice and higher levels of proficiency.

One revelation that was reflected in the responses of the primary caregivers was the dismay that there were not many opportunities afforded to the primary caregivers or the children by the school and the district outside of the classroom to enhance Spanish language learning by the children and the primary caregivers. The responses that the primary caregivers gave indicated that they felt that this lack of support by the school and the district could have been an impediment to the children being academically successful in English and in Spanish.

Recommendations

As a result of this study, the following recommendations are being made:

1. Many of the primary caregivers of the children who participated in this study feel that they cannot adequately give homework assistance to their children (even though they attempt to do so). Because of this, it is recommended that the district attempt to provide more homework assistance to the African American children who participate in this study.
2. The primary caregivers voiced a concern that activities are afforded to other groups of students due to different factors, however, there were no activities provided to this group of children on a consistent basis to promote acquisition of their second language. It is being recommended that the district work to attempt to provide activities on a routine basis (for example, after school

tutoring twice weekly, language learning activities bi monthly, and summer camp activities) that will facilitate learning of Spanish.

3. The primary caregivers voiced that they would like to continue to take language classes if provided by the district. Their perception is that the district did provide ESL classes for parents who were learning English, and because their children also participate in a language program, they should be afforded the same opportunity to learn the same language that the children are learning. It is a recommendation that the district work to continuously offer courses in Spanish for the caregivers of these children.
4. All of the primary caregivers voiced various reasons as to why learning a second language was important in the lives of their children. In order to facilitate the continued language learning of this group of students, it is recommended that the district explore the expansion of the two-way language immersion program through the end of middle school.

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APPENDIX A

Questions for the Primary Caregiver Interview

- 1.) Are you bilingual? *(The impact of the parent's attitude toward the child being bilingual.)*
- 2.) ** If answer to question number one is yes, then proceed to question number two. If the answer to question number one is no, then proceed to question number three. Tell me what you did in order to become bilingual. *(The impact of the parent's attitude toward the child being bilingual.)*
- 3.) You obviously feel that being bilingual is important. Why do you feel that it is important for your child to be bilingual? *(The impact of the parent's attitude toward the child being bilingual.)*
- 4.) Tell in detail the different things that motivated you to enroll your child in a two-way language immersion program? *(The impact of the parent's attitude toward the child being bilingual.)*
- 5.) Can you describe in detail how you feel that being educated in a two-way immersion will help your child? *(The impact of the parent's attitude toward the child being bilingual.)*
- 6.) Describe in detail some of the things that you do to actively involve yourself in your child's education. *(The parent's personal attitude regarding school and how this impacts the academic success of the child, the impact of the parent's attitude on the child's education.)*

- 7.) You have elected to place your child in an educational program where he/she is not being educated in his/her first language. What kinds of activities do you do with your child to ensure that your child is successfully learning in the second language? *(The impact of the parent's attitude on the child's education, the impact of the parent's attitude toward the child being bilingual.)*
- 8.) Can you tell in detail about the extra activities that you make sure that your child is involved in to ensure that he/she is learning in the second language? *(The impact of the parent's attitude on the child's education, the impact of the parent's attitude toward being bilingual.)*
- 9.) What kinds of activities do you do with your child to ensure that your child is maintaining his/her first language? *(The impact of the parent's attitude on the child's education, the impact of the parent's attitude toward being bilingual.)*
- 10.) Homework can be a difficult task for any child. What are the procedures that you use to help your child complete his/her homework? *(The parent's attitude toward the child's education.)*

APPENDIX B

Questions for the Student Interview

- 1.) Tell me about the things that you like about school. (*Impact of student attitude on student academic success.*)
- 2.) Tell me about the things that you like about being in your class. (*Impact of student attitude on student academic success.*)
- 3.) You are in a class where children speak languages other than your first language, English. Tell me about some of the things that make you like being in this kind of class. (*Child's attitude bilingualism and the importance of being bilingual.*)
- 4.) You obviously have a neat teacher who does a lot of cool things in class to help you learn. Tell about the different things that your teacher does to make you feel comfortable in class so that you can learn. (*Impact of student attitude on student success.*)
- 5.) I know that you have a lot of friends. Between all of you, you all speak different languages. Tell me about the languages that you speak with certain friends and why. (*How the child feels regarding being bilingual.*)
- 6.) Some of your friends only speak English. Tell me whether or not you have tried to teach some of them your other language, and tell me who you have tried to teach your other language, and why you have tried to teach them. (*Child's attitude on bilingualism and the importance of being bilingual, how the child feels regarding being bilingual.*)

- 7.) When you are in a situation with one of your family members who does not speak Spanish and someone else who does not speak English, and they need to talk to each other, explain what you do. *(Child's attitude on bilingualism and the importance of being bilingual.)*
- 8.) ****Follow up to number seven.**** Explain how this makes you feel and why. *(How the child feels regarding being bilingual.)*
- 9.) Tell about the kinds of things that you do outside of school, who you do them with, and why. *(Impact of student attitude on student success, how the child feels regarding being bilingual.)*

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